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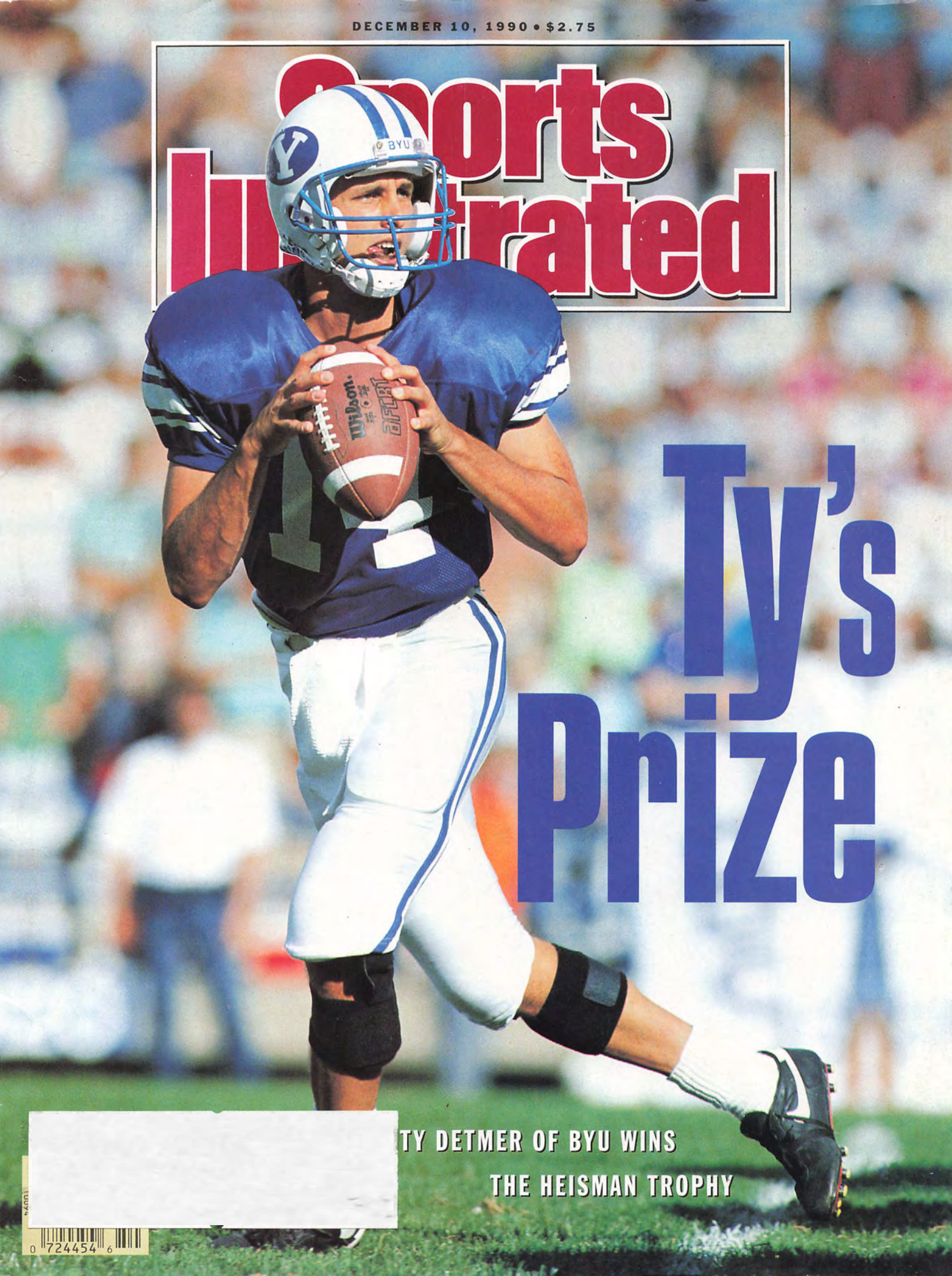

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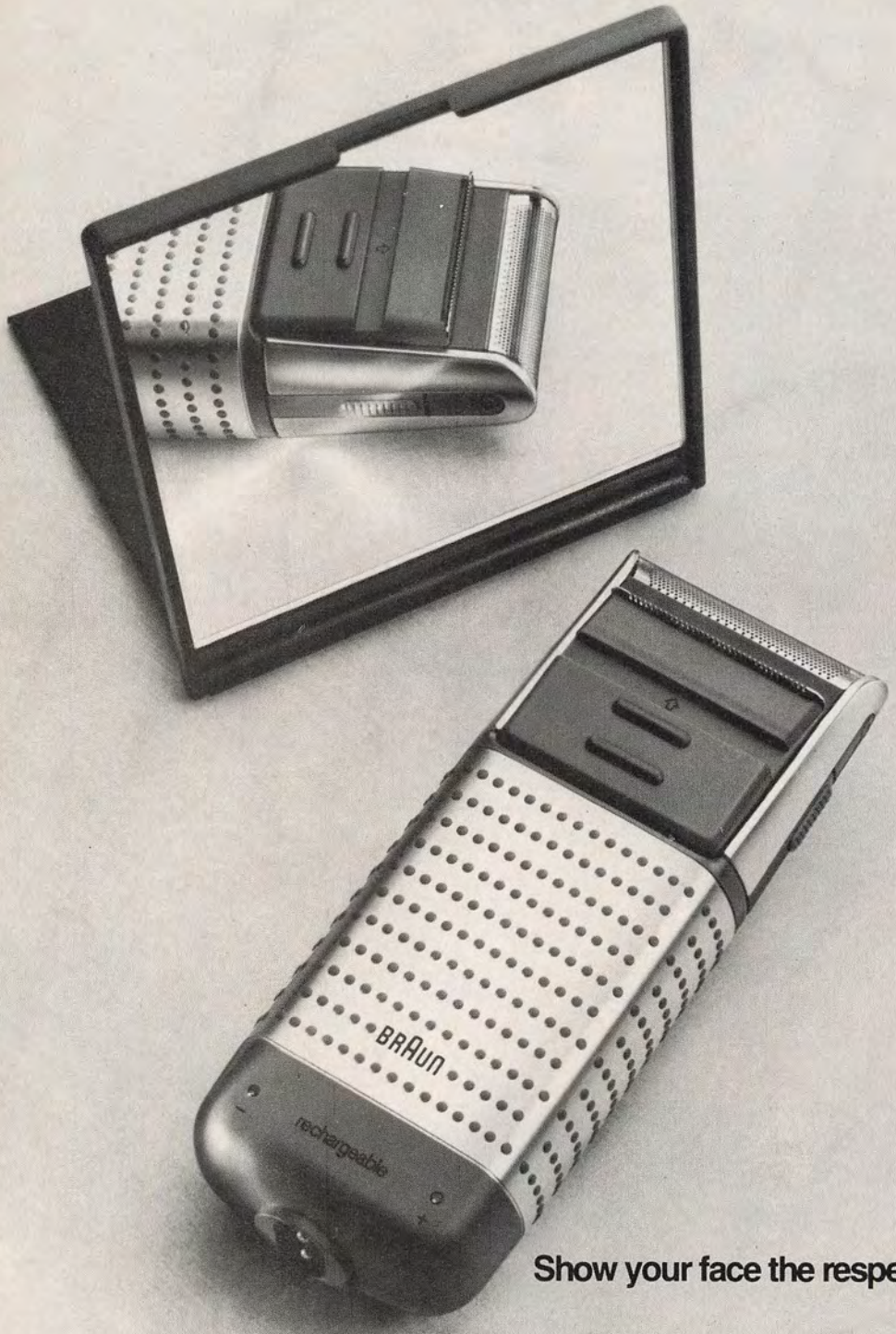

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HARRY BENSON

DECEMBER 10, 1990 • VOLUME 73, NO. 24

Sports Illustrated

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY
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FROM THE PUBLISHER

WE HAVE BEEN LISTENING TO THE EDITORIAL PITTER-patter of little feet around our offices for two years now, and we're happy to tell you that our baby is growing up beautifully. SPORTS ILLUSTRATED FOR KIDS, born in January 1989, now reaches each month more than eight million readers aged eight and older. And as our rambunctious offspring begins its third year of life, it has a new managing editor to succeed John Papanek, who held that job from the magazine's founding until his recent return to SI as managing editor (FROM THE PUBLISHER, Nov. 12). The new editorial chief at SI FOR KIDS is Craig Neff, who, as an SI senior editor, was responsible for our SCORECARD section for the past two years.

Neff, 33, spent his childhood in Roxbury, Conn., before going off to Colgate, where he majored in political science. During his 11 years as a reporter, writer and senior editor at SI, Neff traveled to 23 countries, covering track and field, swimming and other Olympic sports. He also distinguished himself by cowriting several of our stories about Pete Rose's involvement in gambling—coverage that contributed to Rose's expulsion from baseball.

THEO WESTENBERGER

Neff played a baby-faced Santa for his Kids colleagues.

In naming Neff to his new position, Time Warner Inc.'s editor-in-chief, Jason McManus, noted his "combination of youth and laser intelligence." Indeed, Neff looks young enough to pass for one of his readers, and he's sufficiently playful to have posed as Santa Claus—a beardless one, to be sure—for the accompanying photo, which was taken at an SI FOR KIDS staff outing last week in Princeton, N.J. And he's a first-rate journalist, too, with an easy manner that belies a wide interest not only in sports but also in history, literature and social issues.

Looking back on the first two years of SI FOR KIDS, the magazine's publisher, Ann Moore, says, "In this age of television and video games, we worried that kids might not find time in their lives to read a magazine, but they have." In succeeding Papanek, Neff is determined to keep up the quality that makes SI FOR KIDS entertaining at the same time that it teaches lessons in reading, math, geography, science, fitness and social responsibility. "Everything that's important in life is encompassed by the subject of sports," says Neff. "John got us going on the right track. My challenge is to keep us there."

Mark Mulvoy

Sports Illustrated

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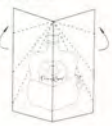

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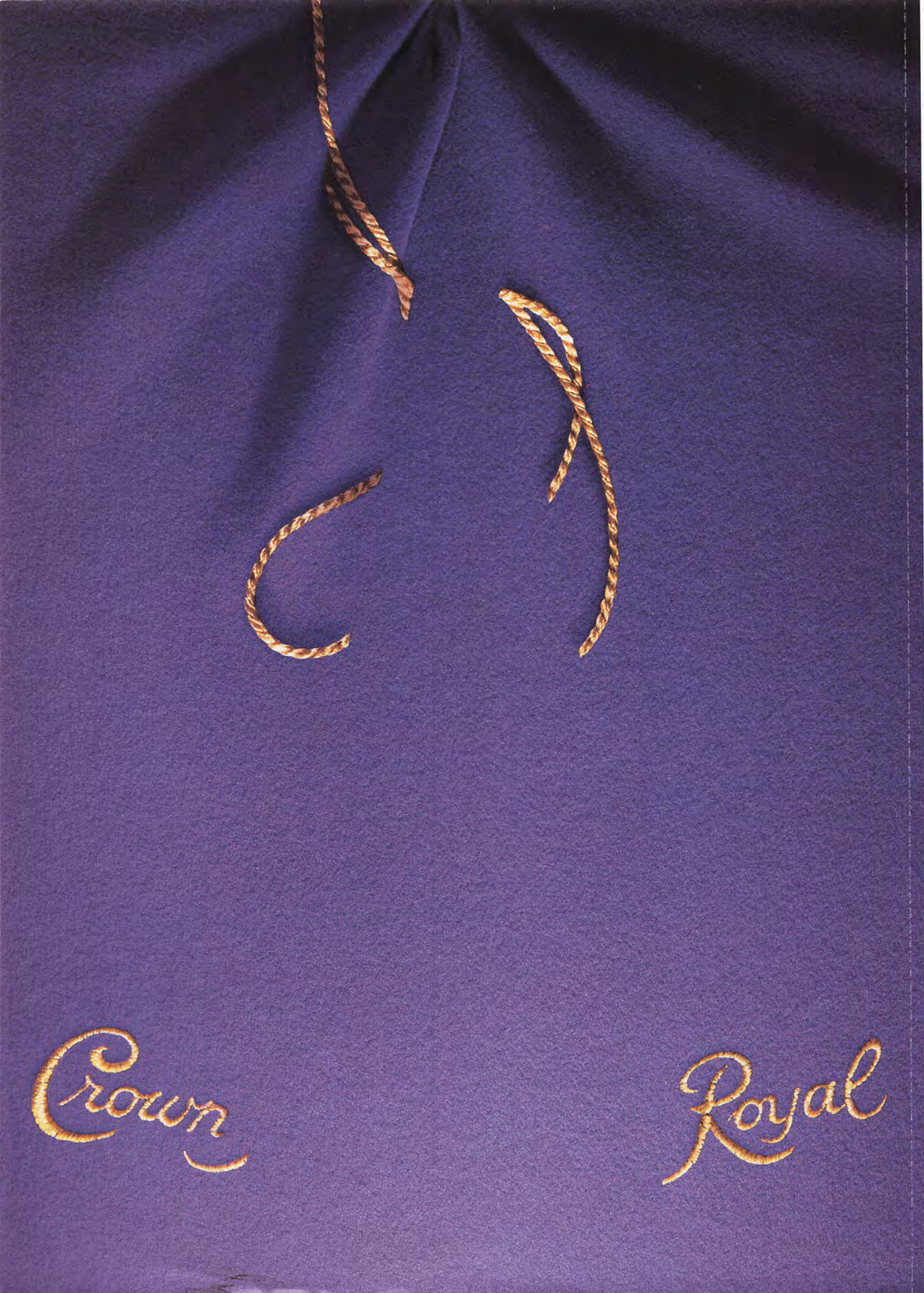
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LETTERS

BILL LAIMBEER

The histrionic whining and intentional provocation that Detroit's Bill Laimbeer practices (*Vintage Whine*, Nov. 5) is exactly the style of play that the majority of NBA coaches try to discourage. Unfortunately, too many young players now believe that acting like Laimbeer is not only acceptable but also desirable. Stories such as yours only contribute to the problem.

MIKE SMITH
Winona, Minn.

What makes Laimbeer so obnoxious is perfectly portrayed on your cover. He weeps, he moans, he prances around. You nailed him perfectly.

HARVEY J. OSBORN
Portland, Ore.

Other teams in the NBA would jump at a chance to get Laimbeer from the Pistons if they could. He can score, rebound, pass, set picks, take a charge, play defense and unnerve opposing players, fans and the referees. Add his leadership qualities and his presence in the lineup for every game, and Laimbeer sounds like a complete player to me.

DAVE HOULIHAN
Birch Run, Mich.

THE PISTONS' PALACE

As a season-ticket holder, I would like to comment on Jack McCallum's story about the Detroit Pistons (*Palace Coup*, Nov. 5).

First, although I always stay until the end of the game, many fans leave early to beat the traffic, as McCallum noted. I blame this largely on The Palace's management. It can take half an hour to get out of the parking lot. Second, I find the scoreboard dot race to be an offensive use of video technology. I wear my coat over my head and plug my ears to avoid this insult to my intelligence. I also resent the commercials that are shown. I don't mind commercials when watching games for free at home on TV, but I do mind when I have forked over the price of a ticket.

However, there is no denying that the Pistons are a top-notch team. The management knows basketball. Hey, even the seats in The Palace are comfortable.

RUSSELL LEVINE
Livonia, Mich.

BONERS

It was a fluke, not an error, but Ron Fimrite's article about boneheaded errors made in front of large crowds (*Nowhere to Hide*, Oct. 15) didn't mention Steve Smith of the Edmonton Oilers. In the seventh game of the 1986 Stanley Cup playoffs, he made the most bizarre play I have ever seen. One of his passes was deflected off the back of goaltender Grant Fuhr's leg and went into the Oilers' net to score, giving the Calgary Flames a 3–2 win and

MIKE PINDER/EDMONTON JOURNAL

A bizarrely errant pass left Smith despondent.

eliminating the defending champion Oilers. With 15 minutes left in the game, Smith had nowhere to hide. . . .

SERGE DUPONT
Montreal

One of my favorite boneheaded errors occurred on Nov. 19, 1978, when the New York Giants were leading the Philadelphia Eagles 17–12 with less than a minute remaining in the game. All Giants quarterback Joe Pisarcik had to do was drop down on one knee and New York would have won the game. Instead, offensive coordinator Bob Gibson called for a handoff to fullback Larry Csonka. Pisarcik failed to get a firm grip on the snap, and the ball glanced off Csonka's hip. Herman Edwards, an Eagle cornerback, picked up the ball and ran 26 yards for a touchdown. Philadelphia won 19–17.

RICHARD M. GIBSON
Lafayette, La.

HIRED TO BE FIRED

I feel as though *Up Against the Wall* (Oct. 29) were written for me. After 22 years of coaching high school basketball in Kentucky, I was fired from that job last spring by the Monroe County Board of Education. There is no way to describe the hurt. It seemed as if everything that I had worked for my entire life was destroyed. It is the worst feeling that I have ever encountered.

SONNY OLIPHANT
Tompkinsville, Ky.

E.M. Swift's excellent article about the firings of coaches, managers, etc., comes at a time when Mike Lude, athletic director at the University of Washington, is being forced to retire after 15 years in the position and about a year from the school's mandatory retirement age of 70.

Lude has done an outstanding job for the Huskies: He leaves behind an expanded stadium seating 72,500, well-funded women's athletics, a new indoor tennis center, a new women's basketball locker room and adequate financial resources derived primarily from a highly successful football program.

No one really knows why he was dismissed. Perhaps it was because university officials didn't like Lude's outspoken manner.

JERRY GEEHAN
Tacoma, Wash.

TWO-SPORT MEN

Steve Rushin's YESTERDAY (Oct. 22) about how, 27 years ago, after a brief stint in the major leagues, Dodger manager Tommy Lasorda pursued a career as an NBA referee, reminded me of another California baseball personality, former Angel third base coach Lawrence (Moose) Stubing. Stubing works in the off-season as a college basketball official. He has an impressive paunch, but that does not keep him from racing nimbly up and down the court.

ANDREW FRUMOVITZ
Providence

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CRAIG MOLENHOUSE

A BIG HITTER FINALLY HITS IT BIG

Long-driving Jim Dent has found success as a senior

BY SONJA STEPTOE

At the edge of a poor neighborhood called The Hill, where the houses are weathered and the streets unpaved, is a chain link fence. On the other side of the fence is a lush golf course set among antebellum mansions. A black youngster from The Hill, 15 or so, leans against the fence and watches a group of white men strolling up a fairway and dreams of playing golf on that manicured grass. In the evening, by the light of a streetlamp, the boy and his friends dig holes in the dirt road in front of their houses and play a rudimentary skins game. They pass a battered putter back and forth among themselves, imitating the strokes they have seen through the fence. Each one puts in 25¢ and the winner gets the pot.

While growing up in Augusta in the 1950s, young Jim Dent and his friends played out this scene countless times. The golf course that bordered The Hill was the Augusta Country Club, and the fairway they could see through the fence was the 16th. The boys were as oblivious to the societal constraints and, for that matter, to the laws of trespass as they were captivated by the golf course. In the late afternoon, they would climb that six-foot fence and furtively roam number 16 in search of balls. Occasionally, if there was time and enough daylight, they would hit a few putts on the green before scurrying home. Spankings usually awaited them, but they didn't care. "I thought that golf course was the greatest place in the world," says Dent. "It was exciting and fascinating just to be around there."

But what's exciting and fascinating today is Dent's performance on the Senior PGA Tour. After 18 years on the regular Tour without so much as a single win, Dent, at 51, has become a star. In his first season on the Senior tour he won two tournaments and $377,691. This year he has been a regular finisher in the Top 10 and has earned more than $600,000 in prize money.

"The progress he's made proves that if you really work on something you can make it," says Bob Rosburg, who hired Dent to be his caddie at the 1956 Masters and now is a fellow traveler on the Senior tour. "You've got to give him credit."

"It's marvelous what Jim has achieved," says his sister Juanita White, who lives in Augusta, "and he's still the same lovable, mild-mannered guy he always was."

He's not the same player, though. The Senior tour has been Dent's mulligan, his second chance. When you're an athlete who was a wannabe the first time, "second chance" is the sweetest phrase you can hear. "I didn't wait around and think about what I needed to do to get ready for the Senior tour," said Dent in his suite at the Silverado Country Club in Napa, Calif., during the Transamerica Senior Golf Championship in October. "I went out and did it."

Actually, Dent didn't have much to think about. What he needed was a short

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Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

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game, and he had known it for some time. On the regular Tour in the 1970s he was one of the longest hitters, but he died around the greens. Still, in '74 he won $48,486, good for 59th on the money list, and *The New York Times* ran an instructional article with the headline HOW TO DRIVE A GOLF BALL FARTHER: WATCH JIM DENT. The same season, SI called him "pro golf's latest Rocket Man." But '74 would be his best regular Tour showing—financially speaking. After that, the "whuuumpf" of his club head meeting dimples continued, but he didn't make much noise on the Tour otherwise. At age 48 and struggling, he began an overhaul of his short game, starting with formal lessons in chipping and putting.

The lack of a formal golf education was Dent's Achilles' heel. He had learned the basics as a teenager at Augusta Country Club by studying the men he caddied for. Their swings and their club choices became his. "There was no possibility for lessons then," says Dent, "and you couldn't ask the golfers questions. You were lucky just to be able to watch them to find out how to do it and then try to duplicate it on your own."

His Aunt Mary saw things a bit differently. Long before he became a caddie, she gave Jim a spanking every time she caught him sneaking onto the course or hanging around the clubhouse. On wages she earned as a housekeeper in one of the mansions down the street from The Hill, Mary raised Jim and three of his seven siblings; his mother died when Jim was six, and his father died when Jim was 12.

Mary and the other parents in the neighborhood disapproved of the boys' fascination with the world of wealth and privilege represented by the country club. They worried about what might happen if the members caught the black youngsters on the wrong side of that fence. Also, Mary didn't want Jim joining the dice-shooting, card-playing caddies at the club. "She said I'd learn how to gamble, and I did," says Dent, chuckling.

After a while, Mary must have realized the spankings were futile because Jim continued to disobey her, and eventually he started caddying at the club. The going rate was $2.50 for 18 holes and that included the tip. After a few years' experience, Jim moved next door, to the adjoining Augusta National Golf Club, site of the Masters.

"Caddies there could make $20 or more a day, so you had to work your way up to it," says Dent. "I'd go over on weekends, when a lot of people were there, and get the leftovers—the ones who only paid $15 and nobody else wanted."

Dent played Augusta National half a dozen times, always with other caddies, on the day after the course was closed for the summer. Whenever he could, he also played on Augusta's public courses. He continued to putt on The Hill and to sneak onto the back nine at the country club.

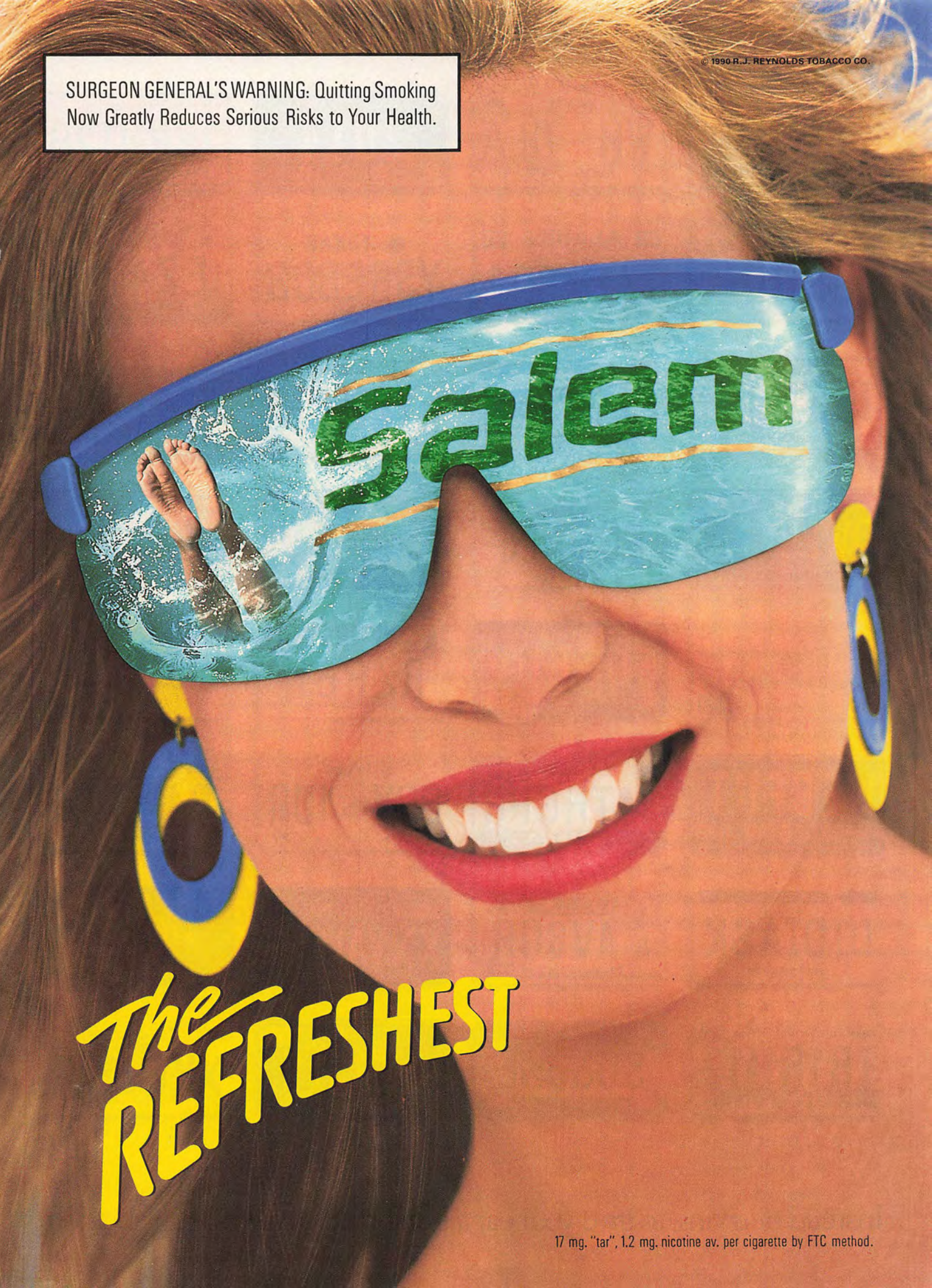
When Dent was in high school in the late 1950s, the PGA Tour still had a Caucasians-only rule. Charlie Sifford's debut on the PGA Tour was still a few years away, and the idea of a black man becoming a Tour professional was almost unimaginable, even to the boys from The Hill. Many of them continued to caddie in high school, but golf for them was only a hobby. No one suspected that Dent was different from the rest. But he knew. "After I started caddying, I really got into golf," he says. "It got to be fun and a challenge."

David DuPree was Dent's football coach at Augusta's Lucy Laney High, where Dent started at tight end for two years. Nevertheless, DuPree was unaware of Dent's golf aspirations until they had long since been realized. One day 15 years ago, a reporter phoned him from Florida to ask whether the Tour's longest hitter had developed his muscles lifting weights in high school. "At first I told him the Jim Dent I knew wasn't a professional golfer," DuPree says. "I was surprised to find out he was."

Andrew Chishom, who was a football teammate of Dent's and a close friend of his at Laney High, wasn't surprised. He has felt the force of Dent's ambition. Thirty years after the fact, he blames his arthritic shoulder on Dent, who tried mightily to run through him one day in practice. "From the black perspective at that time, the idea of becoming a professional golfer didn't seem to be even a remote possibility," says Chishom, who is now a profes-

Dent has made more money as a senior in 1990 than he did in 18 years on the PGA Tour.

JACQUELINE DUVOISIN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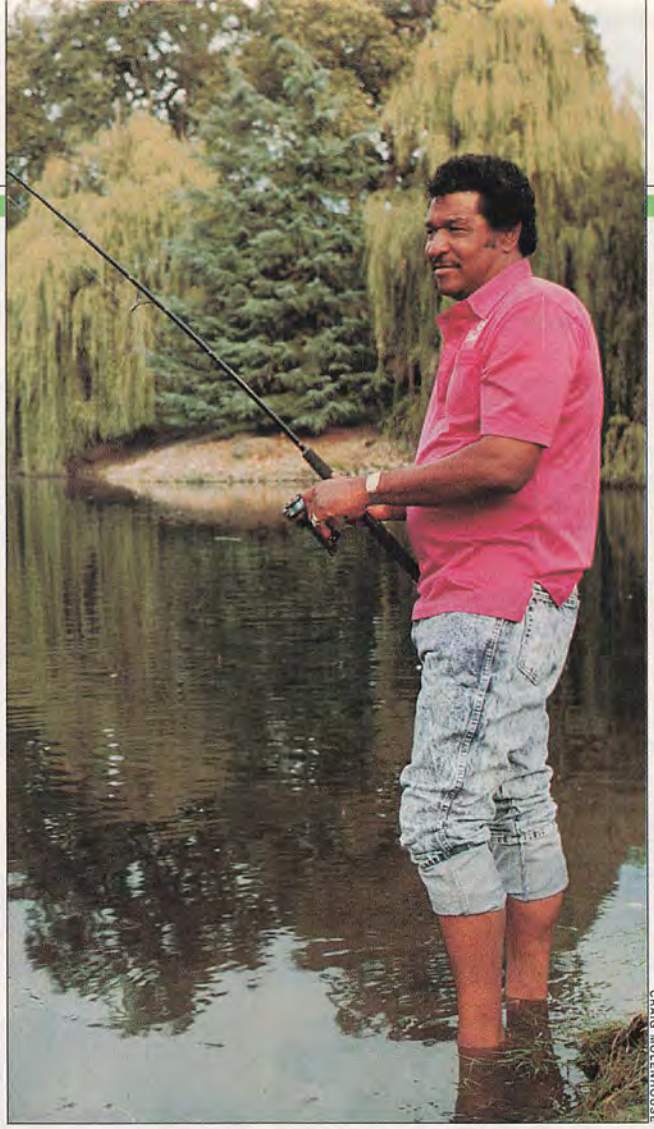

CRAIG MOLENHOUSE

Happiness as a senior citizen includes finding a fishing hole between rounds.

sor of criminology at the University of South Carolina. "But Jim had an explosive, competitive temperament and fierce determination. It just shows that as long as you believe in yourself, you never know what you might become."

In retrospect, says Juanita, "the way Jim was always digging holes everywhere for golf balls and playing, we should have known he was serious. But he was so quiet, you didn't know what he was thinking about half of the time."

Dent's reticence made him an enigma at Laney High. No one could get a fix on the guy with the easygoing manner and the ever-present smile. At six feet and 170 pounds, he cut a dashing figure. His trouser creases always seemed a little smoother. His shoes shone a little brighter. And, as is often the case in high school, the result was he had more than his share of girlfriends. "He had an air of sophistication, which the kids called 'sweetness,' " says Johnnie Jackson, the Laney High offensive-line coach at the time. "It set Jim apart. He seemed to be a young man among boys."

Especially confounding was Dent's nonchalance about sports. According to Jackson, Dent was a gifted athlete who excelled at football and could have been on the basketball and baseball teams. He preferred to spend his springs by the radio, listening to the Dodgers play baseball and studying swings at the golf course.

As a senior, after Laney's 1960 team had finished 6-3-1, Dent (whose teammates included New York Jet-to-be Emerson Boozer) was wooed by several schools to play football. However, he wound up at Paine College, a predominantly black Methodist school in Augusta, 10 minutes from The Hill. After a few weeks there, he dropped out and headed north to Atlantic City. There, he quickly learned that he could play golf every morning and then work in the afternoons, giving him the time he felt he needed to develop his game. Before leaving, though, he hinted at his grand plans, bragging to Boozer that by dropping out he would gain "a four-year advantage on all the guys going to college."

It was a rare display of hubris from Dent, and he is embarrassed by the boast now. "When you're young, you think you're smarter than everyone else," he says. "I've been lucky, but I also have paid the price to be a golfer. I know that once you get a college diploma they can't take it away. It's a great piece of paper to have."

Dent knocked around Atlantic City for about seven years. He played golf and worked nights as a busboy and later as a waiter at the Smithville Inn. James Black, who would become a PGA touring pro and a good friend, helped Dent with his game. The two men shared the same fishing holes and traveled together to events on the predominantly black United Golf Association tour. Having never had a lesson, Dent looked up to Black, although Black was two years younger. A North Carolinian, Black had learned the game from Clayton Heafner and Sam Snead, and had won the Negro National Open, both as an amateur and as a professional. "Jim was all golf in those days," recalls Black.

When they practiced together, Dent would find a water hazard or an out-of-bounds marker and ask Black to explain the rule for playing the ball from there. Except for those dialogues, Dent never had much use for the Socratic method. Homero Blancas, who would coach Dent on chipping when he joined the Senior tour, also discovered that Dent would rather make a golf shot than stand around theorizing about it. "I tried explaining how to put backspin on the ball, but it was easier for him if I hit a few shots and let him try to copy me," says Blancas.

Life near the Boardwalk had its moments. At Mays Landing Country Club, a public course in McKee City where he was club champion in 1966, Dent was a legend. "All the local guys can show you the spots where Jim's 300- and 400-yard drives landed," says Stan Dudas, the current club pro.

"Those were the good old days," says Dent. "I thought I was the greatest golfer in the world. Money was scarce, but I didn't need much and I had no worries. I was doing what I wanted to do."

In Southern California, however, Dent could do it year-round and catch a few Dodger games in person. So in 1968 he headed west. In Los Angeles he met Mose Stevens, a real estate investor and golf groupie. Stevens, who died last year, was a benefactor to Pete Brown and a few other PGA touring pros in the '60s and '70s. Stevens sponsored Dent while he tried to earn his Tour card and, later, after he qualified. "Every summer he gave me $1,000 and a car, sent me back east and told me to play as long as the money lasted," says Dent. "He figured if you couldn't take $1,000 and keep some money in your pocket while you were playing, you were a poor golfer."

After trying unsuccessfully for four

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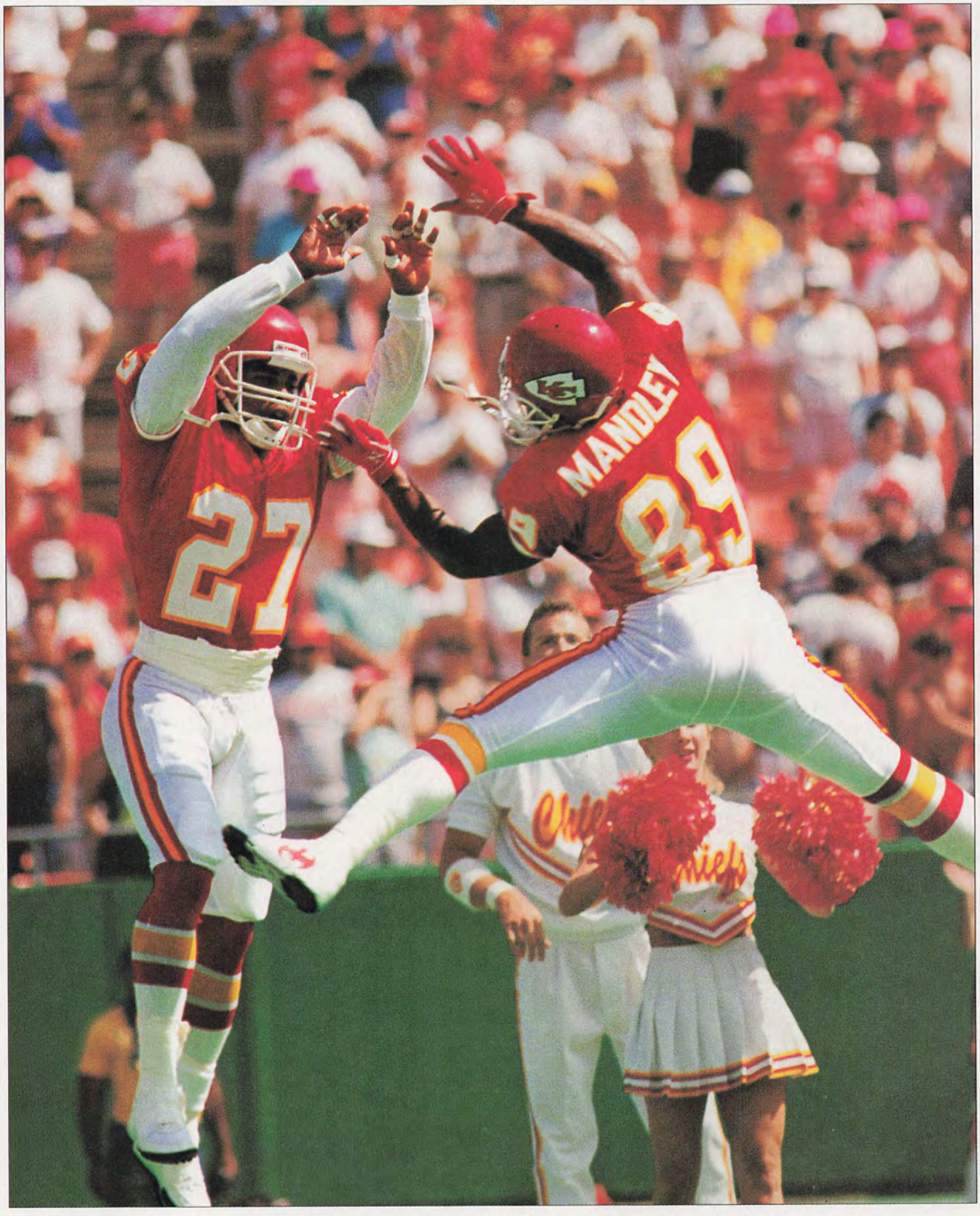
Game Faces Of The NFL



ANTHONY NESTE

Moments before Kansas City's first game, receiver Pete (Batman) Mandley told his good friend, safety Kevin Porter, "Let's do something to get the crowd going–and get us ready too." So with a flying leap and a double high-five the two teammates celebrated the start of a new season.

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Twins Holly and Heather DeLuca put on their game face.

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consecutive years, Dent finally got his Tour card in 1970. He was 31. "That might have been the best I ever played up to that point," says Dent, of the qualifying tournament. "I shot two or three under, and I was never over par."

Before his long drives earned him some decent paychecks and an exemption from qualifying, Dent was a rabbit—one of the nonexempt Tour pros who had to compete in a Monday qualifying round to gain a spot in that week's tournament. Rabbits hopped back to the mini-tours on Tuesday if they didn't qualify. "It was tough because you wanted to know how to shoot 68 instead of 75," says Dent. "But you couldn't learn too much from guys who were shooting 75 just like you."

Intense practice on his short game helped Dent prepare for senior play.

CRAIG MOLENHOUSE

That is as close as Dent comes to a lament about life before the Senior tour. "I didn't make whole lots of money, and I didn't win," he says. "But, hey, I thought it was good."

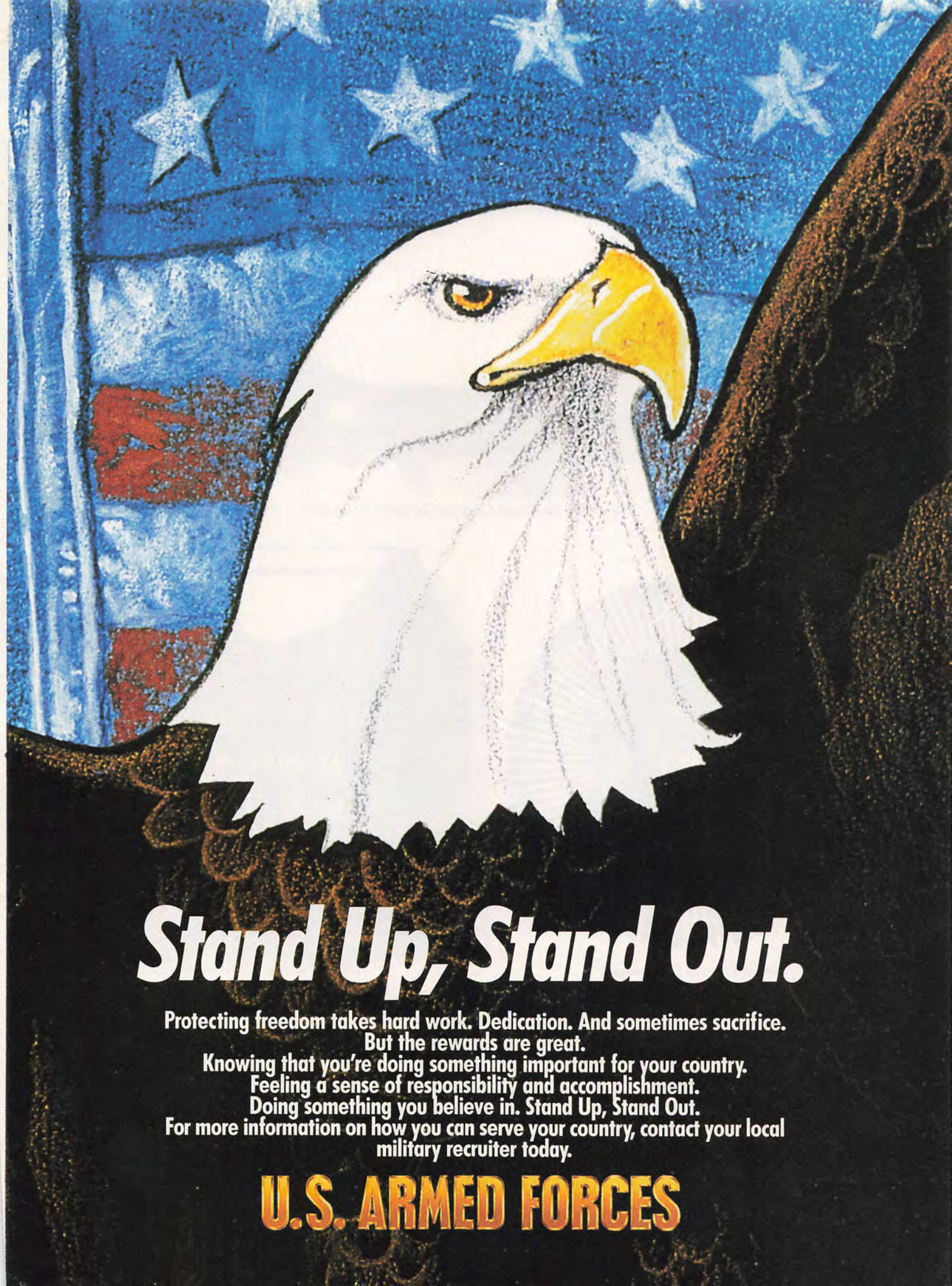
Dent's assessment may be upbeat, but his career on the PGA Tour didn't end in storybook fashion. By 1986 his 14-year marriage was finished. He moved out of the St. Petersburg, Fla., home he had shared with his wife, Brenda, and two children, Jimmy and Radiah, who were nine and 12, respectively, at the time. That same year, he lost his exemption and had to scrape out a living playing in mini-tours in Florida. With help from Black, who by then was a teaching pro in Tampa, Dent worked every day on improving his pitching and putting, getting ready for the Senior tour.

The Jim Dent story seems headed for a happy ending. He was named the Senior tour's Rookie of the Year in 1989, and this year he was the tour's longest driver and his new, improved short game made him a leader when it came to birdies. Since September, fellow seniors and amateurs have been lining up to get their hands on a copy of the 37.5-inch, mallet-head putter Dent used to birdie 15 holes during the final two rounds of the Crestar Classic, at Hermitage Country Club in Manakin-Sabot, Va. He finished 14 under par and won the tournament by one stroke. And Dent is working on a deal to market a metal driver bearing his signature. "Golf has opened a lot of doors for me," he says.

He isn't speaking figuratively. Before she died 10 years ago, his Aunt Mary moved from The Hill into a brick house Dent had built for her in Augusta. He owns one home in Tampa, is negotiating to buy some duplexes in Atlanta as investments and is midway through construction of a second house in a tony Augusta subdivision.

Life away from golf is happy, too. Dent remains close to Radiah and Jimmy, who live with their mother in St. Petersburg. Jimmy, a high school freshman, was in the gallery when his father won the Syracuse Seniors Classic in June. Just before he flew to Napa, Dent went to an open house at Jimmy's school to check on his son's progress in algebra. He reminded Jimmy that he won't be allowed to play football if his grades slide. Several times a week Dent phones Augusta to chat with his two grandchildren and with his daughter from a short-lived first marriage, Charlene, who teaches in the day-care center at University Hospital. "The money and everything is nice," Dent says, "but the thing I'm most proud of is being a winner."

It is late afternoon at Silverado Country Club, and Dent, who led the first two rounds, has just shot a final-round 71 to finish tied for eighth at the Transamerica event. He signs autographs and answers questions from a group of youngsters from Oakland who came to Napa to watch him play. For about 20 minutes he chats with them, showing them his golf clubs and letting them examine his cart. Before he leaves, he gives each one a golf ball. The youngsters are delighted, and so is Dent. He knows what it's like to be a kid who likes golf. ■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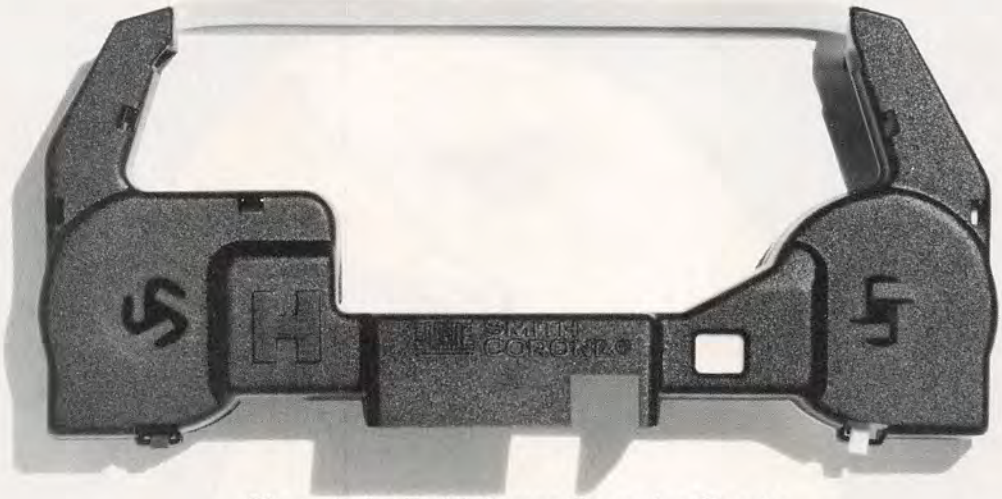

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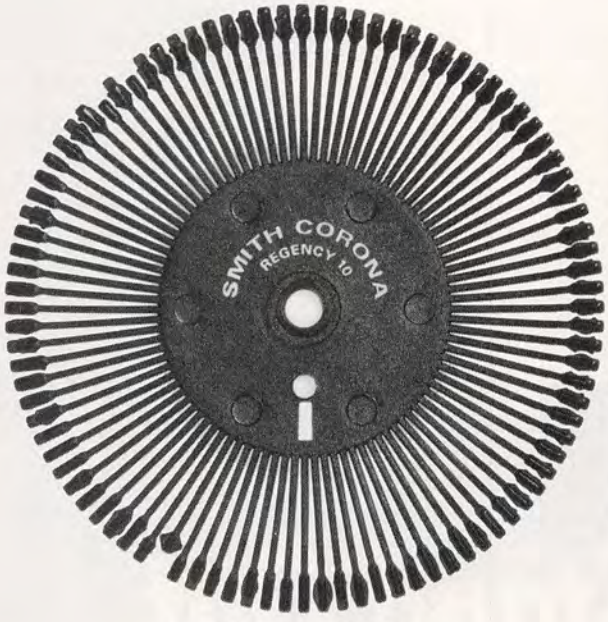

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EDITED BY MERRELL NODEN

THE CHAMP IN THE GULF

After a 10-day visit to Iraq, former heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali left that country for Jordan Sunday with 15 of the estimated 300 U.S. hostages held in Iraq by Saddam Hussein. Ali and the hostages, whose release he was credited with having arranged, left Amman on Monday bound for New York.

According to associates, Ali, who has been an immensely popular figure in the Moslem world since his conversion to Islam in 1964, made the trip in the company of his former manager Herbert Mohammed, public relations man Arthur Morrison and two members of the Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East, a group associated with former attorney general Ramsey Clark, who says that the trip's "basic purpose was peace and friendship."

The hostage release occurred as a result of a 50-minute meeting between Ali and Hussein in Baghdad on Nov. 27 during which the two men talked about the Persian Gulf's history. "There is a real fundamental relationship between Hussein and Ali because they're both Muslims," says Lindsey Clennell, a British filmmaker who is making a documentary about Ali and was also in the delegation. "Ali wasn't taking a political, Iraqi-bashing stand. He was going basically to assert the need for peace in the gulf because Ali's against war." Said Ali after the meeting, "This is the land of the Garden of Eden, and the land where Abraham was born. How could it be bombed?"

This was not the first time Ali had undertaken a quasi-diplomatic mission. In 1980, at President Carter's request, he made a tour of five African nations in hopes of persuading them to join the U.S.-led boycott of the Moscow Olympics to protest the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. That trip generated controversy when Ali acknowledged that had he known more about the U.S.'s failure to support the African nations' boycott of the '76 Olympics, he might not have undertaken the mission.

Despite the happy outcome of his Iraq visit, Ali was once again opening himself to second guessing. Was he playing into the hands of Hussein, whom the Bush Administration, among others, has accused of using the selective release of foreign hostages to divide the international alliance against Iraq? Of greater concern to some of Ali's other associates was whether Morrison's presence indicated that Ali has fallen too much under Morrison's sway. Morrison, who has offices in California and Florida, for some years has been involved in business deals with Ali, some of which have gone sour amid accusations that Morrison misrepresented the extent of the ex-champ's participation.

ABC NEWS

Ali talked history with Hussein and left with 15 U.S. hostages.

There were wire-service reports that during the trip Ali, who suffers from Parkinson's syndrome, sometimes had to communicate through the use of hand signals. "I think that was a little exaggerated," Morrison told SI in a telephone interview from Amman. "Ali has spoken many times. He chose a vow of silence out of respect for the [hostages] until he had met with Iraqi officials."

In California, Ali's wife, Lonnie, said last Saturday that when Ali left New York the previous Monday, he took with him only enough medication for five days, which meant that by the time he left Iraq on Sunday, he had been without medication for eight days. Said Lonnie, "That is why, when people see him on the news, his symptoms are exaggerated. From what I understand, he is very, very tired."

One of the released hostages, Harry Brill-Edwards, an engineer from Fort Lee, N.J., said, "He's quiet, but he's better than I expected. His speech is halting, but he's sharp. To make that long journey in his condition—he's just a tremendous human being."

Of the possibility that Ali was being manipulated by others, Clennell said it is typical of Ali not to worry about such matters: "Ali always has shared himself with everybody, unconditionally. That's what makes him so special."

DETOUR TO YOUTH?

The New York Road Runners Club, which organizes and oversees the New York City Marathon, said last week that 20 of the entrants in the Nov. 4 race had been disqualified for various infractions. Intriguingly, all 20 were men, and almost all were over 40. Among those caught was the apparent winner in the men's 60–69 age group, Jim McNearny of Melbourne, Fla., who crossed the line in 2:41:28 but failed to pass through two of the course's four video checkpoints.

Dr. Harold Selman, a Manhattan psychiatrist and marathoner who helps runners prepare mentally for the New York event, offered an explanation for the narrow demographic profile of the alleged cheaters. "When you are a man and you are over 40, you are into midlife crisis," Selman said. "You don't want your time to decline. You want to be young, powerful, potent. But who are

you fooling? It's a very sad, pathological thing to do, like cheating at solitaire."

FEMININE ALLURE

Women should be better anglers than men. That, at least, is the implication of *Salmon and Women: The Feminine Angle*, a new 176-page book by Peter Behan, a professor of clinical neurology at Glasgow University, and Wilma Paterson, a British free-lance writer. Their explanation for this lies in pheromones, the hormones that mammals, insects and fish use to, among other things, attract mates. "It seems quite possible that [salmon] could sense the sex hormones of women and be attracted to them," write Behan and Paterson.

As Behan and Paterson note, the biggest salmon ever caught in a river in Great Britain was a 64-pounder landed by Georgina Ballantine on the Tay in Scotland in 1922. And the largest shark caught off the British coast was a 500-pound mako that Joyce Yallop hooked in '71.

The experts are not convinced. Asks Dr. Steve McCormick, a researcher at the Northeast Anadromous Fish Research Lab in Turners Falls, Mass., "Even if fish could sense [women's pheromones], why would they respond with feeding behavior? That's not my first response when I'm sexually aroused."

PATRICK MCDONNELL

PUNISHING BEN KELSO

Earlier this year SI's William Nack wrote a story about Ben Kelso, the basketball coach at Detroit's Cooley High (*A Lesson in Survival,* March 5), in which Kelso acknowledged, among other things, giving food and clothes to players and intentionally sending the wrong players to the free throw line during a game. The Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) revealed in its November bulletin that based on an investigation prompted by Nack's story, it had put Cooley on probation for two years and suspended Kelso from coaching the Cardinals in this season's district tournament.

Kelso, who led Cooley to three straight Michigan Class A titles from 1987 to '89, offers explanations for most of the actions reported by Nack. Cooley is situated in a poor section of northwestern Detroit, and Kelso, who has been a father figure to many of his players, says the gifts of food and clothing were made out of necessity. For example, addressing the MHSAA's finding that he had given a player a coat, Kelso says, "A player came to me in the dead of winter. He didn't have a coat, so I gave him my coat." He adds that the coat was eight years old. Of an MHSAA determination that he had given food to a player, Kelso says, "The kid had been home sick for a week. He called and said there was no food in the house. I'd be a very poor man if I heard something like that and didn't do something about it."

As for whether he encouraged his players to switch at the foul line, Kelso now says that Nack misunderstood him. "I was aware of [wrong players going to the line], but I didn't premeditate anything," he says. "Coaches see things the refs miss all the time. If I'm sitting on the sideline and I see a kid step out of bounds, but the ref misses it, am I supposed to stop the game?" He points out that the opposing coach alerted the referee to the mistakes, but to no avail.

Says Jack Roberts, the executive director of the MHSAA, "The article brought our attention [to these violations]. We contacted the school and asked them to check out the quotes attributed to him. There appeared to be violations." According to Roberts, Cooley officials were "totally uncooperative." Roberts says that in addition to charges involving food and clothing, "there are also serious allegations of paying kids. The article itself says thousands of dollars." What Roberts seems to be referring to is $600 in summer school tuition fees and $2,000 for a van that Kelso bought, donated to the school and then used to drive some team members to summer school, both of which were mentioned in Nack's story. Says Roberts, "The rule is that outside season, school vehicles are not to be used." Kelso concedes that on some days he made as many as two 40-mile trips to Ypsilanti and back so that his players would not miss any summer school.

Still, the MHSAA seems to have overreacted. Kelso may have been guilty of unsportsmanlike behavior in the free throw episode, but even his opponents would have trouble persuading anyone that he's a cheater. As for the favors bestowed on players, it is true that the MHSAA has rules against such actions. But those regulations are aimed at coaches who use gifts as recruiting inducements, whereas Kelso is not known to recruit players from outside the Cooley area. "The players were already attending Cooley," he says. As Kelso rightly suggests, he would have been far more culpable had he *not* helped his players. "I would do it again without regret," he says. "Teaching has always seemed to me to be a helping profession."

THEY SAID IT

• Lou Duva, manager of heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield, on portly challenger George Foreman: "Some people say George is fit as a fiddle, but I think he looks more like a cello." ■

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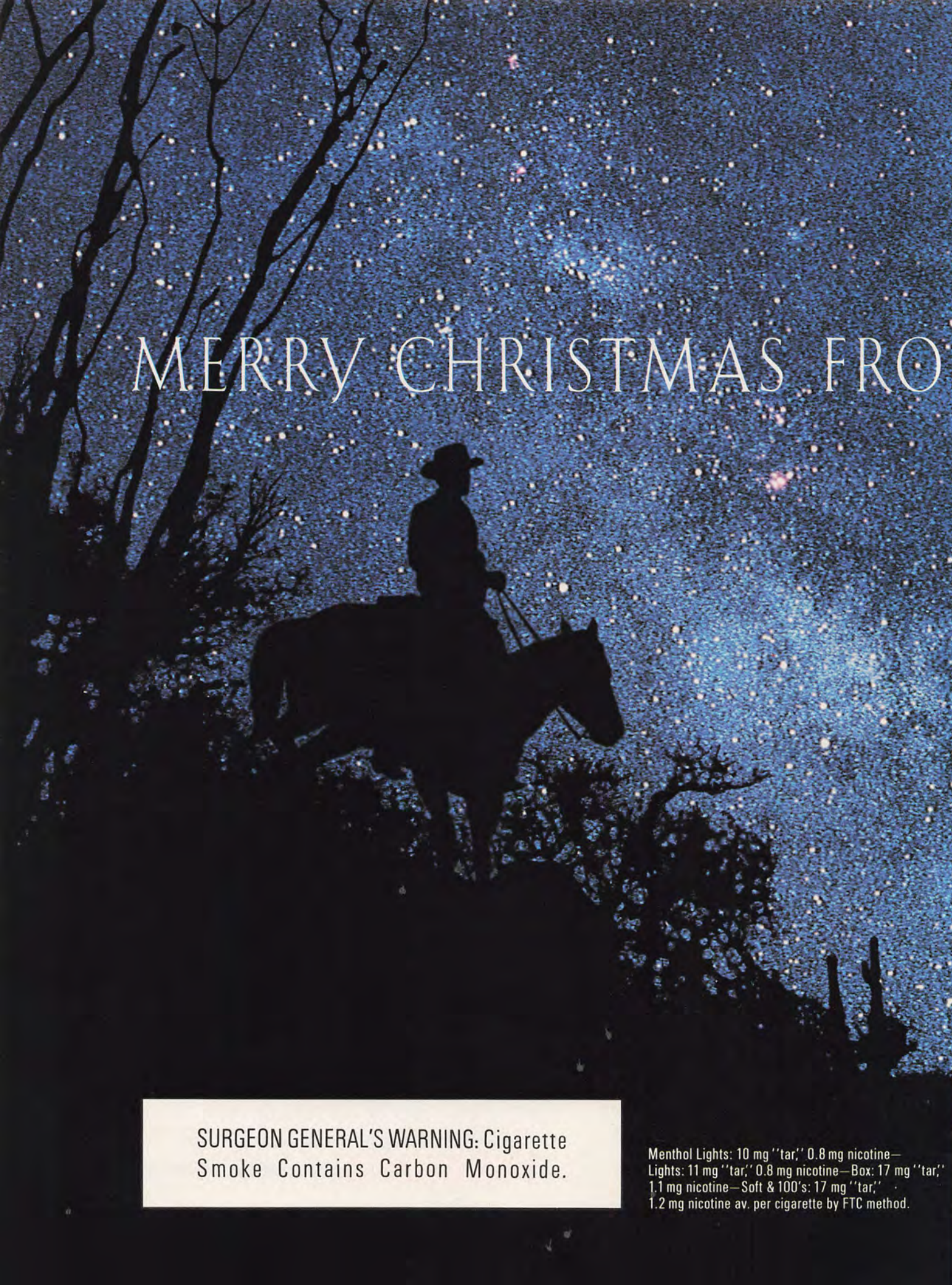

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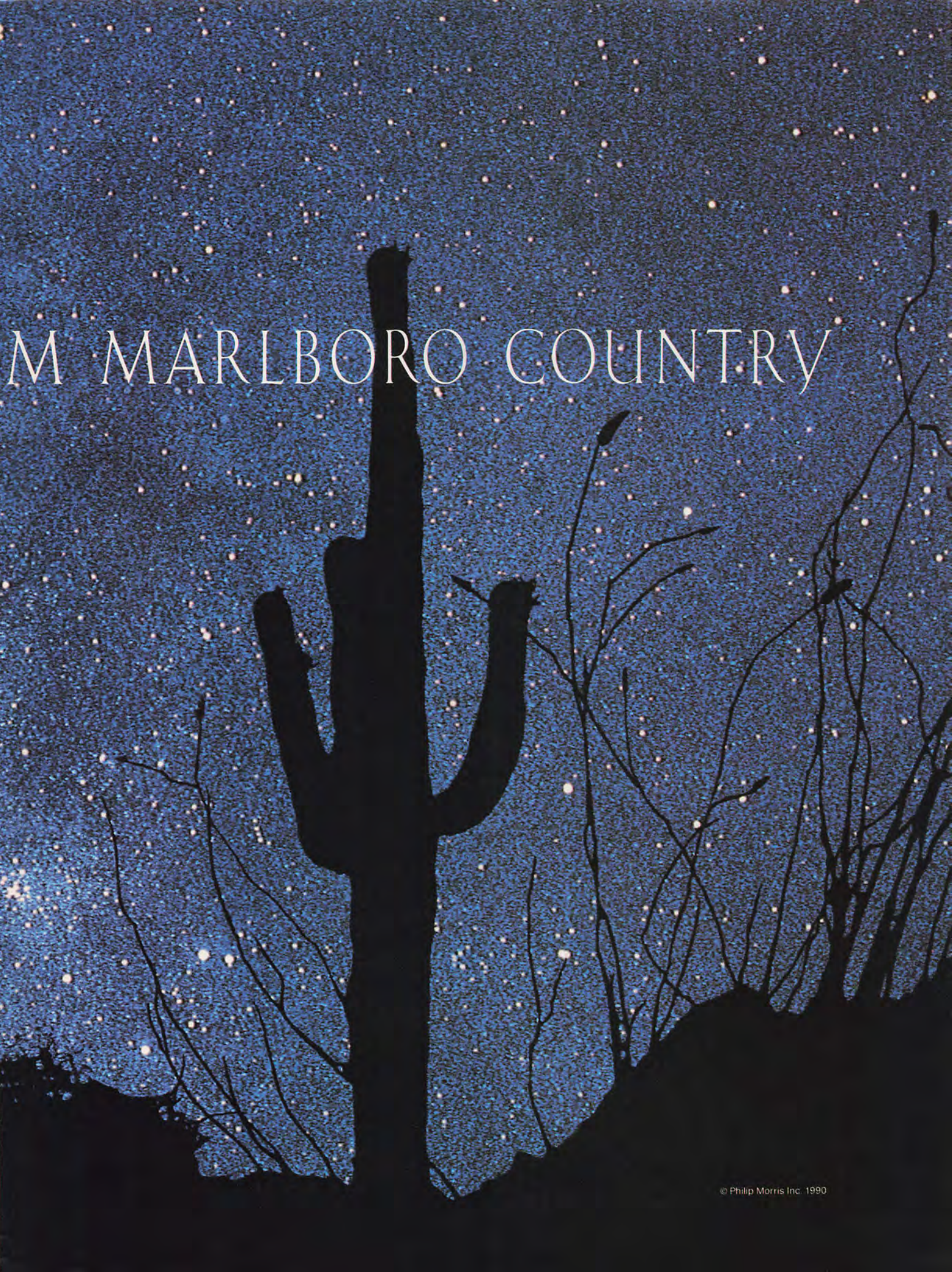
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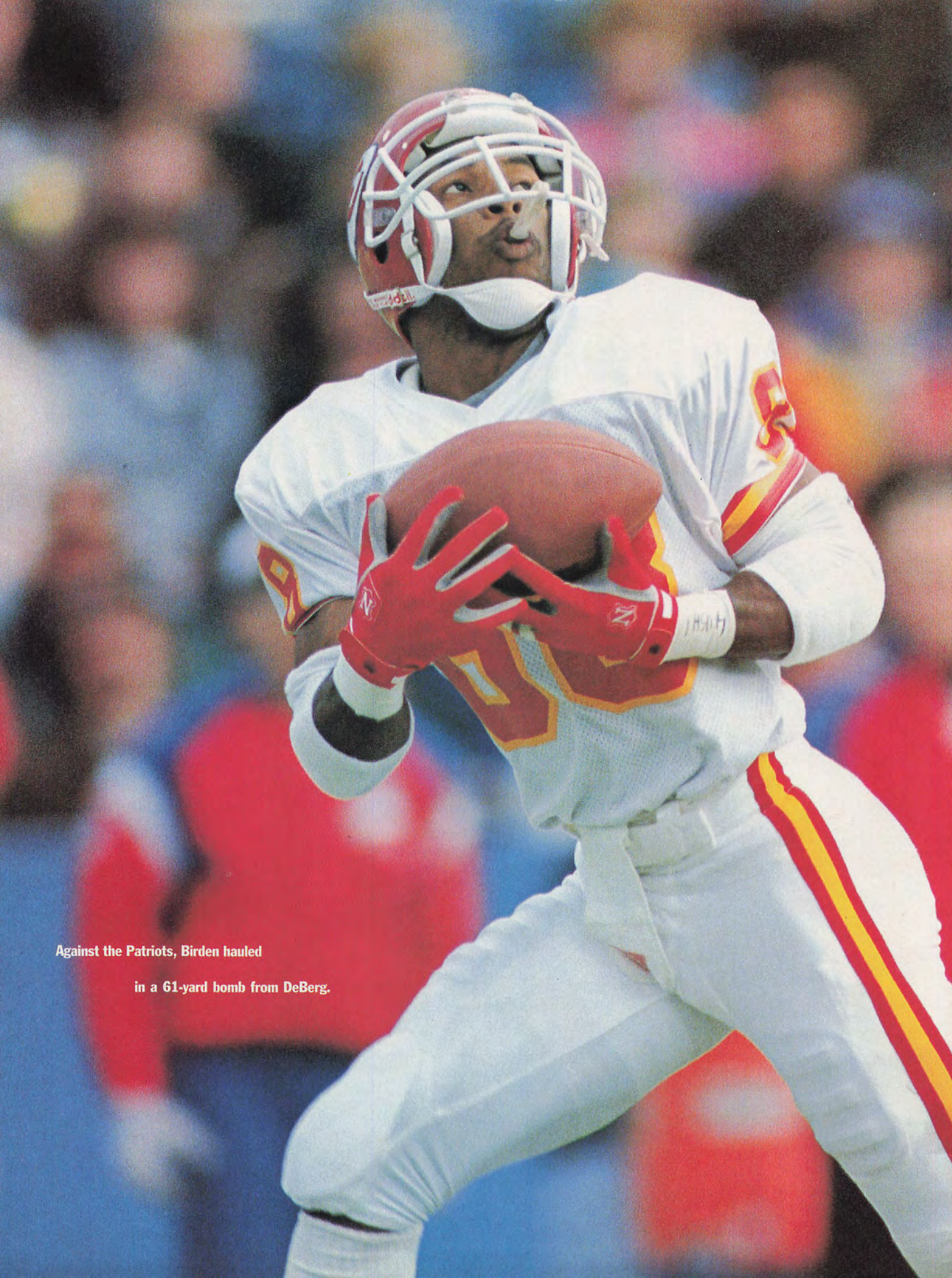
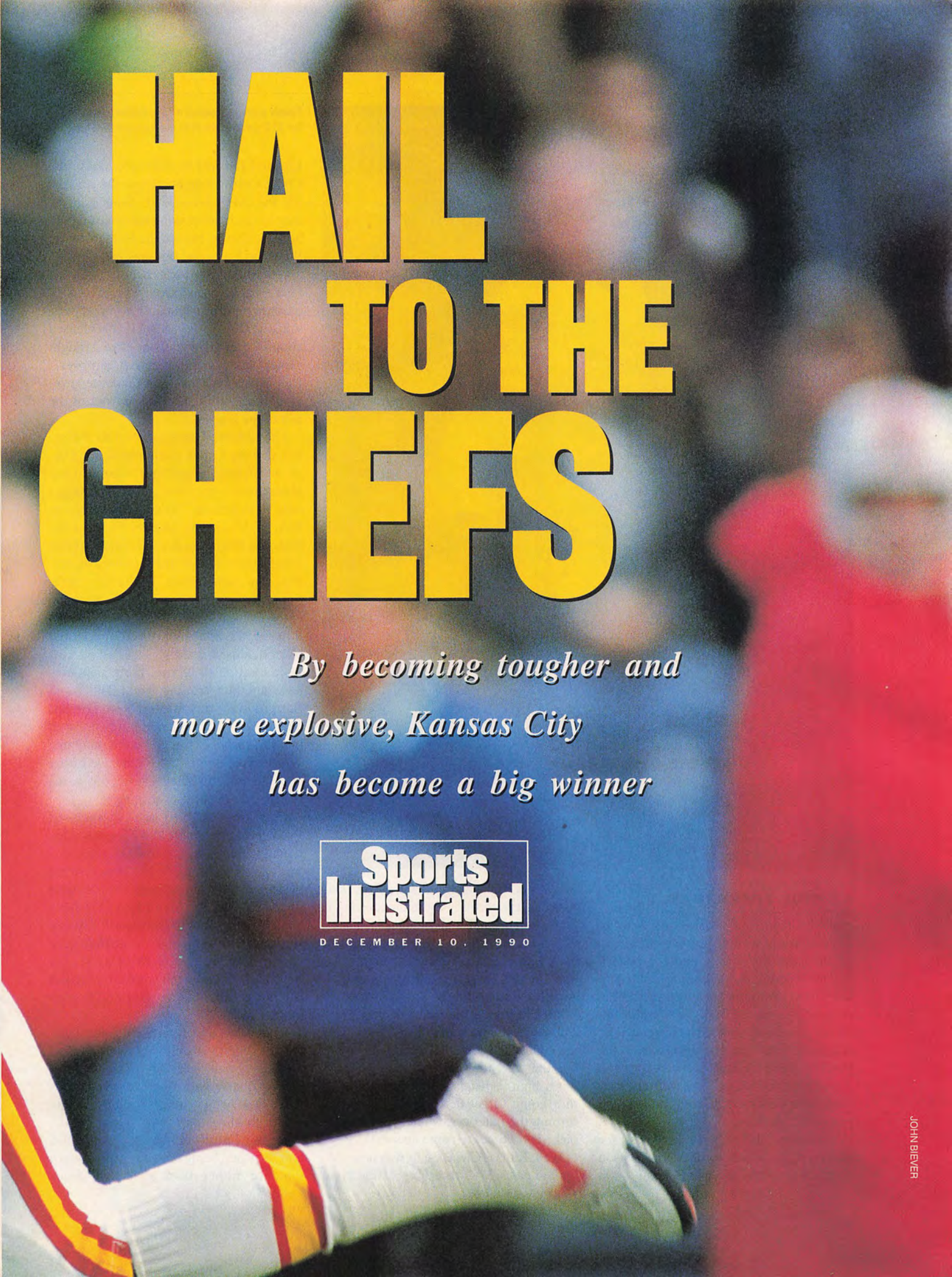


Against the Patriots, Birden hauled in a 61-yard bomb from DeBerg.

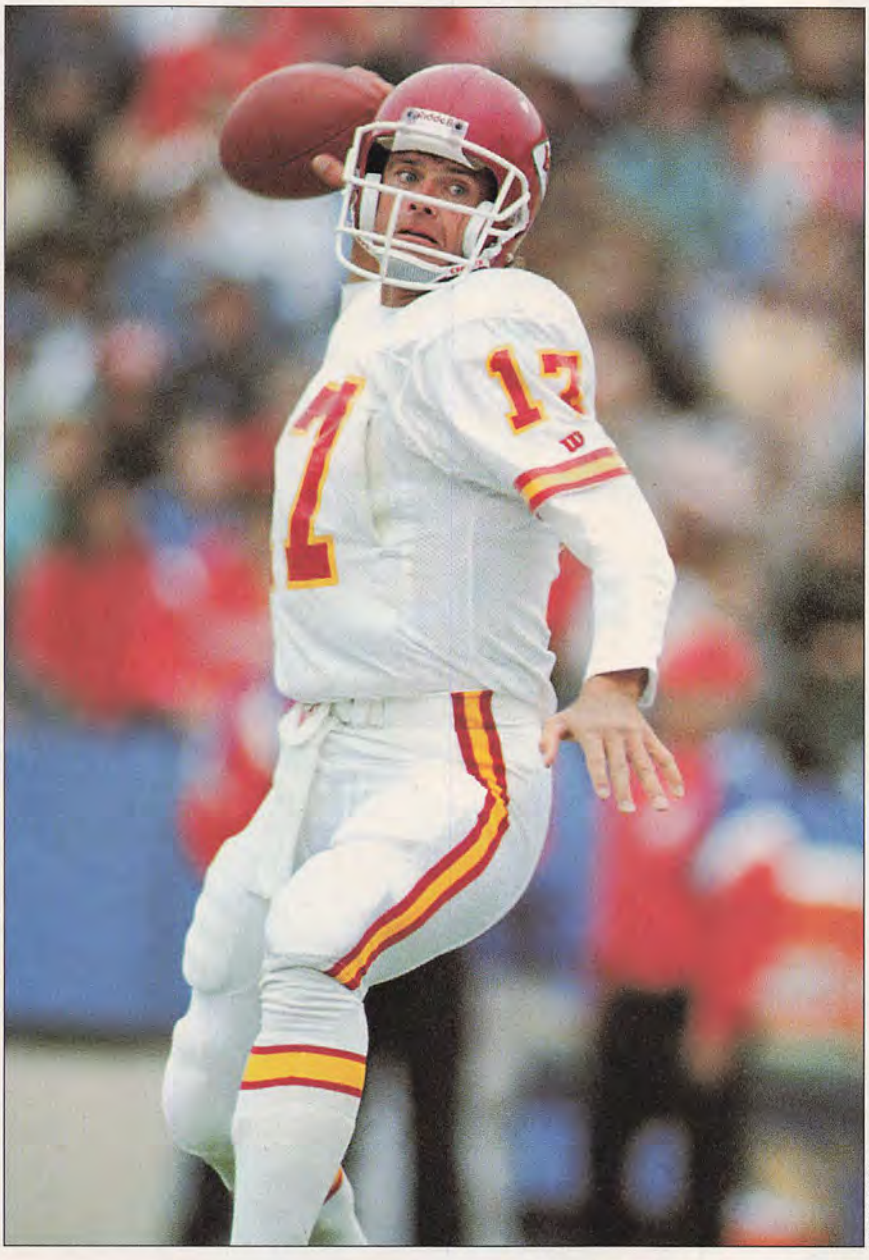


HAIL TO THE CHIEFS

By becoming tougher and more explosive, Kansas City has become a big winner

Sports Illustrated
DECEMBER 10, 1990

JOHN BIEVER



JOHN BIEVER

Finally gaining respect at 36, DeBerg passed for 312 yards in the first half against the Pats.

BY PAUL ZIMMERMAN

IN 1989 THE KANSAS CITY CHIEFS WERE a defense waiting for an offense to happen. Sure, they had the Nigerian Nightmare, 260-pound Christian Okoye, who ran for more yards than anyone else in the NFL, but when defenses ganged up to stop the big guy, K.C. was in trouble. The operation was in the hands of Steve DeBerg, Steve Pelluer and Ron Jaworski, a trio of cast-off quarterbacks who took turns starting, and the job just didn't get done.

Turnovers also were a weakness for Kansas City, which finished the season with eight more giveaways than takeaways. As flashy as the defense was (statistically, the second best in the league), it had a soft spot. Teams that put it to the Chiefs on the ground, that smacked them hard with bigger people, beat them. The San Diego Chargers did it twice; the Los Angeles Raiders once. So K.C. finished 8-7-1 and joined the ranks of "yes, but" clubs that almost made the playoffs. Yes, the Chiefs had something going for them, but how were they going to improve without a high-tech quarterback? How were they going to get better when they kept turning the ball over, when their defense picked odd times to come up soft?

Well, Kansas City is on its way now. After Sunday's 37–7 thrashing of the New England Patriots in Foxboro, Mass., the Chiefs were 8–4 and tied with the Raiders for the AFC West lead. What's more, they've got a tiebreaking hammer on L.A. because they've beaten the Raiders twice. What has happened this season?

"Execution," Marty Schottenheimer, falling back on the favorite word of NFL coaches and firing-squad commanders, said after the game. "What I'm so pleased about is that we've gone five straight games without an offensive turnover." Kansas City is plus-22 in takeaway-giveaway ratio, and that's well in front of the rest of the league.

The defense has toughened to the extent that the Chiefs' old nemesis, San Diego, which had rushed for 944 yards in five consecutive wins over them, could get only 99 in Kansas City's 27–10 victory on Nov. 18. Credit the defensive scheme for that, says Bill Maas, K.C.'s former All-Pro noseguard who now plays defensive end. Plus the new inside linebacker, first-round draft pick Percy Snow. Plus the emergence of Neil Smith, a No. 1 selection in 1988, as a solid run-stopper at the other defensive end.

In addition to Okoye, the Chiefs now have another bruising back, 240-pound Barry Word, the former New Orleans Saint whom they signed as a free agent in the off-season. If you go by the numbers, Word has been the more effective of the two. He has outrushed Okoye, 595 yards to 326, over the last seven games.

Now we come to the 36-year-old DeBerg. He has spent 14 NFL seasons listening to people say, "How can you?" before saying his name. As in, "How can you play Steve DeBerg and keep Joe Montana on the bench?" Or John Elway? Or Steve Young? Or Vinny Testaverde? DeBerg started ahead of them all while they were cutting their rookie teeth. This year it was "How can you call yourself a serious contender when Steve DeBerg is your quarterback?"

DeBerg, who looks at life through cynical yet slightly twinkling eyes, says, "I might go down in history as the greatest backup quarterback who ever lived." Has there ever been a time for him when he wasn't battling for a job? Yeah, on the 2–14 San Francisco 49er teams of 1978 and '79, when being the quarterback was a sentence rather than a reward. Since

then, as he has made the rounds—Denver, Tampa Bay, Kansas City—he has always been a puzzler. "A lot of quarterbacks have supposedly been a lot better than me," he says, "but they've come and gone, and I'm still here."

This year DeBerg emerged as the starter through attrition, after the coaching staff decided that Mike Elkins, a second-round draft pick in 1989, wasn't ready; that Pelluer, a seven-year veteran who didn't show much as a starter with the Dallas Cowboys, wasn't the answer; and that Jaworski, who is 39, wasn't worth keeping around any longer. Now DeBerg finds himself as the unchallenged No. 1 quarterback on a contending team. There's a first time for everything. "Ironic, huh?" he says. "A lot of times I think, God, why didn't this happen to me when I was good?"

He has had weird games this year, when his passes were ducking and sailing. For instance, against the Seattle Seahawks at home in Week 10, wideout Robb Thomas had to make acrobatic, diving catches—on eight-yard hooks. But DeBerg also has had games in which he has flung rockets that could not miss. Sunday's outing against the Patriots was a case in point. First pass: 86-yard touchdown to Stephone Paige on a deep post. Second pass: 61-yard streak to J.J. Birden. Two passes, two completions, 147 yards. At the end of the first quarter, DeBerg had thrown for 216 yards, and by halftime he had 312.

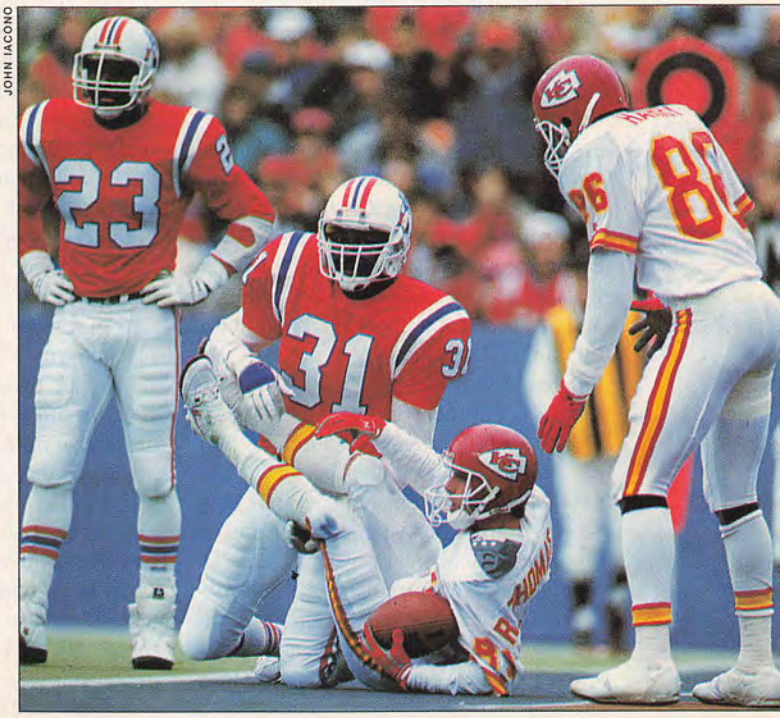
"Ever had 300 yards by halftime?" he was asked after the game.

"In college, maybe, but never in the pros," he said.

The score was 23–0 at that point, and the hunt was over. So Schottenheimer, being a man of mercy, called off the hounds. DeBerg threw only three times after intermission, converting two dink passes for 19 yards, but he still ended up with 15 completions in 21 attempts for 331 yards, two touchdowns and no interceptions. This gaudy showing raised his quarterback rating to a career-high 92.3, but his most impressive stat is his league-low interception ratio—three in 328 throws.

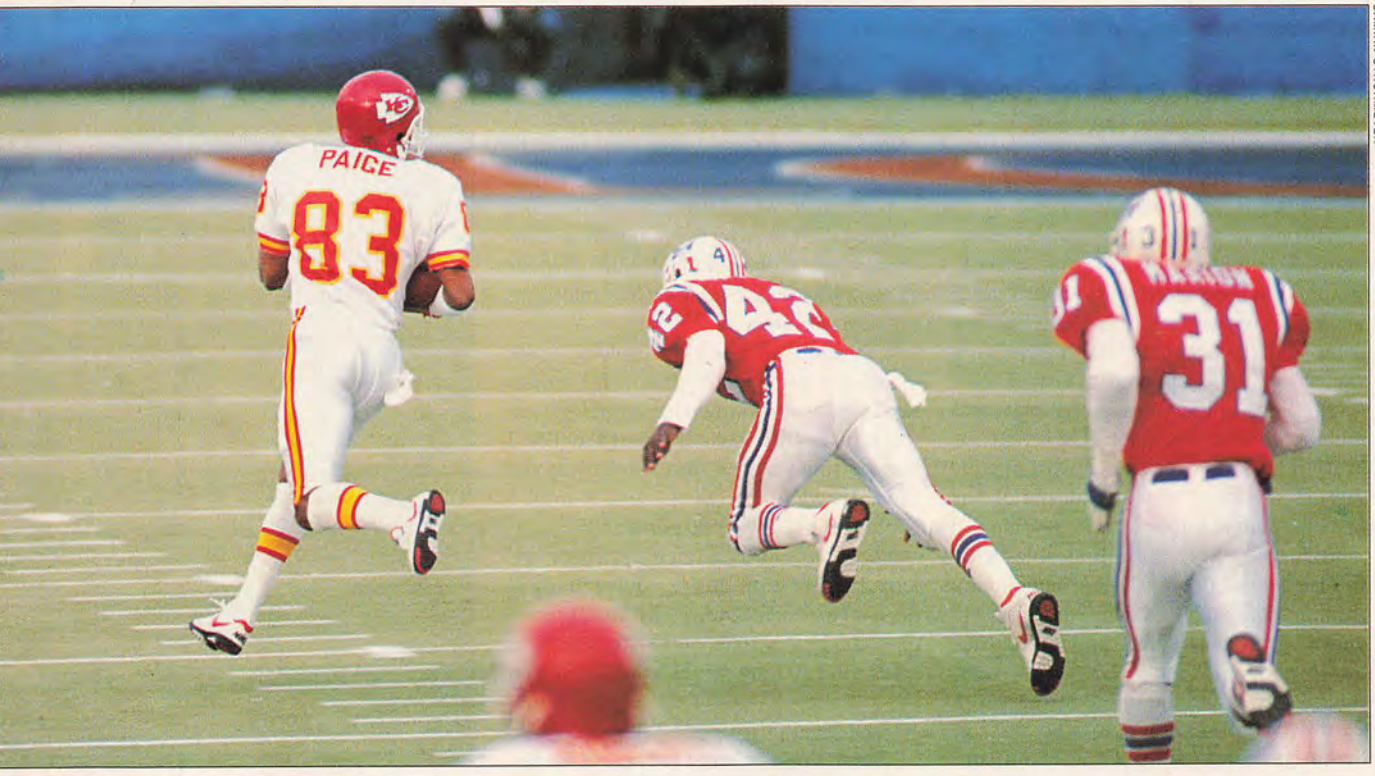
"That's the part I love about him," says Schottenheimer. "The guy simply has not thrown interceptions. When the season started, I frankly didn't know where we were going to be, which is always the case with a team that doesn't have what you'd consider a dominating quarterback.

"I'll tell you when Steve made a believ-



JOHN IACONO

Paige went all the way on the first play, and Thomas landed in the end zone as well.



DAMIAN STROHMEYER

er out of me: against the Raiders in L.A., with the division lead at stake. They'd just come back to tie us in the third quarter, and you could sense the momentum shifting. We've got a first-and-15 on our five, and there's more noise than I've ever heard in the Coliseum. Steve throws the ball to the tight end for a first down. Then he hits Paige on a little inside streak for 22. We run the ball, and then he hits Stephone again for about 25 yards. We wound up kicking a field goal, and it shut the crowd up.

"Steve threw for a touchdown in the fourth quarter, but then they drove for a TD that put them down by three. We held the ball for the last four minutes and change to win it. On one third-down play we simply had to have the completion, and Steve gave it to us. At that point I was thinking, You know, I've got a pretty tough quarterback here."

So is it a mirage, this late emergence of DeBerg, who ranks seventh among NFL passers in 1990, or is he for real? "Last year was difficult on me," says DeBerg. "It was Marty's first year as coach, and everything had to be proven to him. He didn't want to hear what anyone had done in the past. It took him awhile to figure me out, my ability, my personality, the whole package. I was benched twice; I was the starter three different times. It was frustrating.

"Marty's very competitive. When we weren't winning early in the season, someone's head had to roll, and it turned out to be mine. But you know, there really isn't a whole lot of difference between my performance then and now. The difference is in our entire offense.

"For me to perform best, I need teammates who are thoroughly in tune with the system. I'm not a great improviser; I don't make a lot of plays out of nothing, the way some quarterbacks do. What I excel at is executing a good play at the snap. Not scrambling, but executing the play and making it work. It's taken half a year for everything to fall into place with our offense, but now we've won four out of our last five, and we know what we're doing."

For six years, including five with the Cleveland Browns, Schottenheimer's trademark as an NFL coach was a conservative, ground-oriented attack. He has never had a losing season. This year, though, he turned the offense over to Joe Pendry, a USFL graduate who was on Schottenheimer's staff in Cleveland, and sparks have been flying—such as a 90-yard TD pass on the third play against the Chargers and the long-ball madness at the start of Sunday's game.

"Joe told me on the bus to the game that we were going to start with a play fake and then a deep pass," DeBerg said later, "because the Patriots figured to play the run tough on the first series."

Last week it was pointed out to DeBerg that three of the six longest pass plays in the NFL this season were his. "The second coming of Daryle Lamonica," he said. "That's me, the Mad Bomber."

"I think it's time," says Paige, who after eight seasons in the league can still be one of the NFL's premier deep threats. "You saw it happen. Things are going to stretch out now; they're going to open up. It's a sign of a team on the rise, a team that's ready to win."

The one dynamic addition to the Kansas City offense has been Word, a more instinctive runner than Okoye and almost his equal in power. Word has been the second man in. Okoye softens them up, DeBerg loosens them up with the bombs, and Word finishes them off. He got 200 yards against the Detroit Lions on Oct. 14 and 112 against the Pats, who held Okoye to five. He's averaging 5.5 yards per carry to Okoye's 3.3.

Anyone else might complain about not starting, but Word is thankful just to be playing, because his résumé has a couple of dead spots on it. Four years ago he spent 4½ months in a Morgantown, W.Va., prison for cocaine distribution. "No excuses," says Word, who went to Virginia. "I was a young, dumb college kid. I thought what I was doing was cool. I learned." Drafted by the Saints before his conviction, Word rejoined New Orleans in '87, only to take a hike two games into the next season.

"It's kind of hard to explain," says Word, an introspective man who spends his Tuesdays working with school kids in the Kansas City area. "I didn't feel like I was putting enough into football at the time. I had to get away from it until I could feel like I was 100 percent."

The Chiefs have talent everywhere you look, but not until this year have they put it together. Nick Lowery, the kicker, has a personal-best streak of 13 straight field goals after nailing three, from 19, 32 and 45 yards, against New England. Maas, who had two sacks on Sunday, is looking like the Pro Bowl player he was at noseguard. Derrick Thomas, an All-Pro outside linebacker as a rookie last year, got into the record books with seven sacks against Seattle, but he sat out the Patriot game with a sprained knee. Free safety Deron Cherry, coming off a long rehab from knee surgery last December, is just rounding into the form that made him a

JOHN BIEVER

John Stephens got persuasive evidence that Kansas City is no longer soft against the run.

six-time Pro Bowl player. Finally, Kevin Ross and Albert Lewis are the finest pair of cornerbacks in pro football.

Ross, a compact, 5′ 9″, 182-pound hitter—Little Marvin Hagler, they call him—is the tough guy. He takes pride in knocking the ball loose. Lewis is the thoroughbred, a 6′ 2″, 190-pound glider with uncommon grace and speed. He's a natural cover man. "The finest pure cornerback I've ever seen," says secondary coach Tony Dungy, "and I was with Mel Blount on the Steelers."

Lewis also may be the best punt blocker of all time. We'll never know because individual records haven't been kept, but on Sunday he blocked a Brian Hansen boot to give him four for the season and 10 for his career (including one in a playoff game). That block was the Chiefs' sixth of the season, which *is* an NFL record.

Kansas City fans, hammered by years of mediocrity, have boosted attendance to an 18-year high, averaging better than 70,000 at Arrowhead Stadium. Two home games are next, against the Denver Broncos and the Houston Oilers, and the season ends with two roadies, against San Diego and the Chicago Bears.

"This team has stepped up," says Maas, "and created something, created opportunities. In the past we couldn't meet them. We're ready now." ■

ZEROS, NOT HEROES

UCLA won the national soccer title without scoring a 'real' goal

BY NICHOLAS DAWIDOFF

As 4,613 GOAL-STARVED FANS AT the NCAA men's soccer final at the University of South Florida Stadium in Tampa bellowed for a winner, any winner, UCLA midfielder Jorge Salcedo gazed pensively at the ball. By converting this penalty kick, Salcedo could put an end to the shoot-out that was now deciding matters after the Bruins had battled Rutgers through 2½ scoreless hours of soccer. Salcedo was attempting to forget the three such kicks he had missed in high school and to keep in mind Rutgers goalkeeper Bill Andracki's tendency to commit to one side early.

Salcedo stutter-stepped, Andracki went left and Salcedo flicked the ball into the right side of the goal for the win. With that, gleeful UCLA players piled onto each other at midfield. Then, of all things, they burst into song, a takeoff on the theme from the TV show *Gilligan's Island* they had penned for the occasion. It began, "Now sit right back and you'll hear a tale, of the Bruin club," and concluded, "We own Tampa Bay."

It was a god-awful rendition, but the fans gave the Bruins a nice hand anyway, and you couldn't much blame them. The only other creative element evident in this tepid finale was UCLA's feat of emerging with its second national championship in six years without scoring a goal in regulation or overtime play all weekend.

Which is not to say that the Bruins are completely undeserving victors. If their offense, which outscored opponents 61–16 in 22 games this season, was missing in Tampa, their defense, anchored by freshman goaltender Brad Friedel, held firm when it had to. "We've had a lot of success with our offense," said UCLA striker Billy Thompson, an 18-goal scorer this season, "but it's defenses that win championships."

Luck and resolve help too. After surviving the shoot-outs that decided both their matches, the unflappable Bruins claimed this exhausting weekend in what their coach, Sigi Schmid, termed "a tribute to mental determination."

Going into the tournament, the slight favorite was Evansville, Rutgers' opponent in Saturday's first match. The Purple Aces boasted the nation's top-ranked goaltender, Trey Harrington, and the second-leading scorer, David Weir. That combination and a high-pressure style of play had given the Aces a 24-0-2 record and victories in their last 20 matches. Weir, a hulking 6′ 3″, 205-pound striker nicknamed Ox, grew up in the city of Falkirk, Scotland, where schoolchildren must recite Robert Burns poems on the poet's birthday, something Weir described as "a chore." Who better to mark him, then, than 6′ 3″, 185-pound Rutgers co-captain Alexi Lalas, an English major with red hair whose own poems are published in Rutgers literary magazines? Weir wasn't a factor because, as Evans-

GEORGE TIEDEMANN

Cobi Jones (right) battled Andres Maier for the ball in an exhausting, evenly matched finale.

ville midfielder Graham Merryweather of Southwell, England, put it, everywhere he went, "he had that big ginger-headed lad breathing down his neck."

Throughout the game, Evansville looked tentative, even flustered. With less than two minutes remaining in the first half, midfielder Pedro Lopes raced down the right sideline and pushed the ball ahead to Lino DiCuollo, whose arching cross found Mike Miller all alone for a header six yards from the goalmouth. Harrington had no chance on what would be the tournament's only regulation-play goal.

The second semifinal matched North Carolina State and UCLA. Before the game, the Wolfpack's Argentine coach, George Tarantini, said, "Soccer is not popular here in the United States because we don't entertain people. Soccer should be happiness and passion." His team proceeded to outshoot the Bruins by a staggering 33–14 count, all but vivisecting the Bruin defense in the process. It was to no avail, though. Brilliant play in the nets by Friedel excused a multitude of Bruin defensive sins, most prominently the red card and tournament expulsion fullback Ray Fernandez earned when he punched North Carolina State forward Roy Lassiter in the stomach near the end of the first half of overtime.

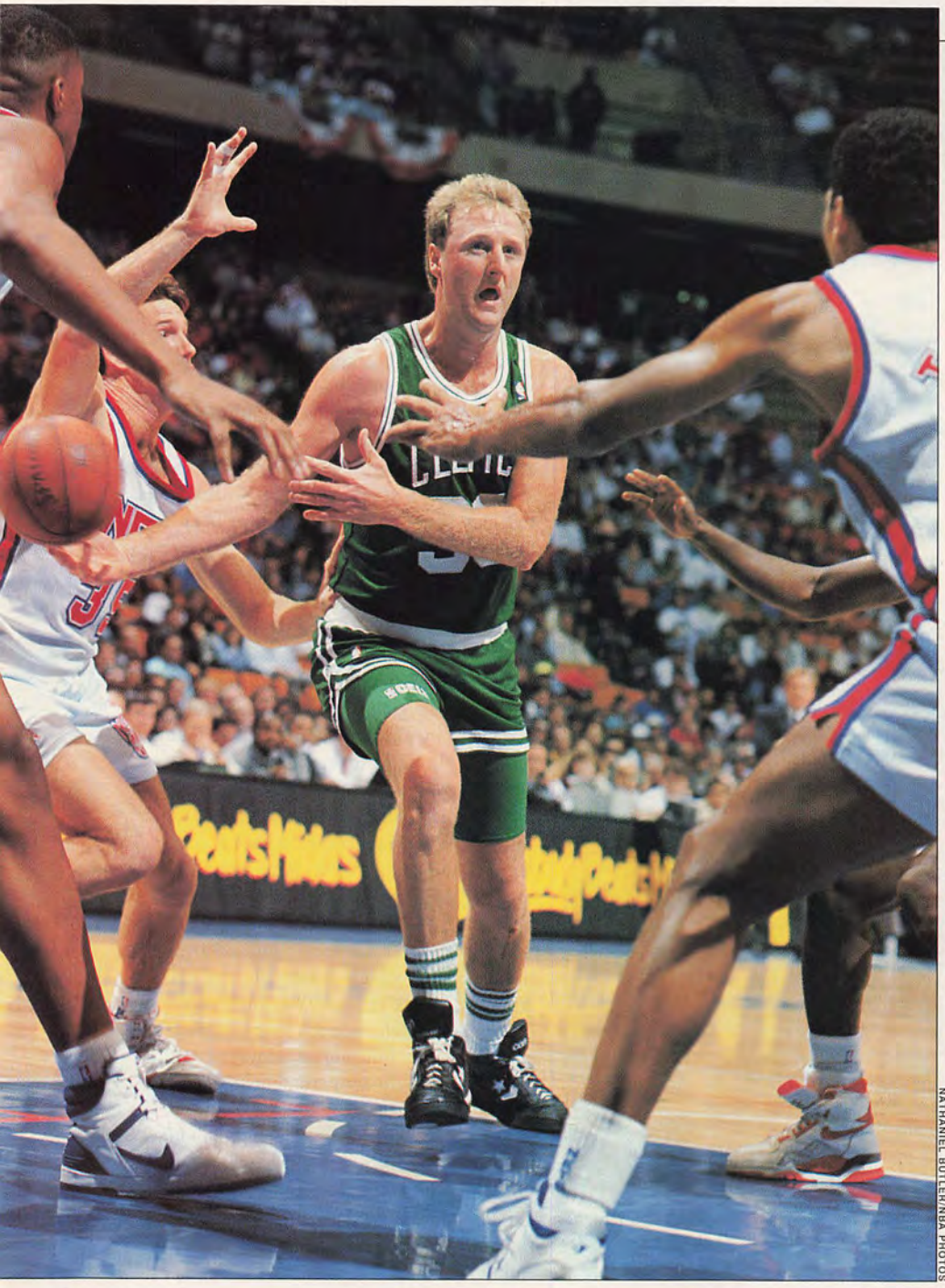
Still scoreless after two 15-minute overtime periods, the game came down to penalty kicks. UCLA went five for five. Friedel deflected Scott Schweitzer's shot and left the Wolfpack howling at the nearly full moon that shone on the stadium. "North Carolina State was the better team," Schmid said afterward. "They outplayed us the entire game."

"I'm skipping confession tomorrow," said Tarantini, who had left the field to pray by himself during the penalty kicks.

Beyond forgiveness are the boneheaded NCAA committee members who scheduled the semis and final without a rest day between. It should have been a lively final. UCLA's lone loss this year was a 2–1 decision to Rutgers in October. Both teams play fast-paced soccer and in Rutgers striker Steve Rammel and UCLA midfielder Chris Henderson, each possessed one of the most feared players in the college game. Weariness prevailed, however, in an even game: Each team took 22 shots. Late in the second half, with fans shouting, "Do something," the 5′ 5″, 135-pound Thompson, whose mates call him Wee Man, squirted past two defenders and slid a shot by Andracki. It hit the post, and Thompson shot the rebound high.

After another scoreless hour of overtime, during which some players collapsed with leg cramps, the final shootout began. Before each shot, Friedel stretched his long arms skyward and grabbed the eight-foot crossbar. The sight seemed to rattle Rutgers' second and third shooters. Rammel shanked one wide right, and Mueller's shot went high. "Mueller didn't look confident," said Friedel. "He stared at me when I was touching the post. I looked at him and thought, Hmmm." After UCLA's Sam George failed, Joe-Max Moore, Tim Gallegos, and Henderson all tallied, leaving Salcedo to nail down the 4–3 win.

Although staging a tie-breaking shootout was an improvement on simply declaring co-champions, as was done after last year's 1–1 final between Virginia and Santa Clara, it still concluded matters rather awkwardly. "The shoot-out has nothing to do with it," said Lalas. "We could have come out at three o'clock, flipped a coin and saved everybody the trouble." In these games with more zeros than heroes, he may have had a point. ■



NATHANIEL BUTLER/NBA PHOTOS

UP TO THEIR SAME OLD TRICKS

Young legs join three savvy graybeards and—presto!—the Celtics are off and running

BY LEIGH MONTVILLE

THE WHOLE THING HAS BECOME A little bit blurry. There is the television show about the bar in Boston on Beacon Hill, the little place where everyone knows your name. There is the basketball team that plays its games in an old barn of an arena at the edge of the North End.

Blurry.

The television show keeps going . . . and the basketball team keeps going . . . and no one is exactly sure how it happens. There are times when the television show seems about ready to die . . . and there are other times when the basketball team seems ready to die . . . and suddenly changes are made. A new character here. A new character there. The television show suddenly seems new and different. The basketball team seems new and different.

"What do we do now?" the producers of the television show ask Red Auerbach, venerable president of the Boston Celtics, the basketball team. "First, we lose Coach, one of our solid citizens. Then we lose Diane Chambers, one of our stars."

"You surprise people," the venerable president replies. "You replace Coach with a younger guy. You make him some dufus and you call him Woody. You replace Diane, the perfect what-do-you-call-it, ingenue, with Rebecca, the perfect killer career-woman. You rebuild around what you already have. You knock 'em dead."

Blurry.

"What do we do to shake up our operation?" Auerbach, in turn, asks the producers. "Everyone says we've become old and slow."

"You bring in some youth, some young guys like Brian Shaw and Dee Brown," the producers say. "You give some free-

dom to the youth you already have. You bring in a new coach and a new general manager and a new philosophy to surround the marquee-value stars you already own."

The television show stays near the top. The basketball team climbs back near the top. How do you figure? The cheers keep rolling.

"I'm surprised," Chris Ford, the new Celtics coach, says. "Yeah, sure I'm surprised. I had no idea what was going to happen. You certainly hope that things will unfold the right way, but I didn't think we'd start the way we've started."

The start has been a hop, step and a jump of dramatic proportions. The team that was supposed to be too old, too old, a thousand times too old, had bounded to a 12–3 record as of Sunday, third-best behind Portland and Detroit in this young NBA season. The aging nucleus of Larry Bird (34 on Dec. 7), Kevin McHale (33 on Dec. 19) and Robert Parish (37) suddenly seems as if it has been taking swimming lessons on the set of the movie *Cocoon*. The kids—Shaw and Brown and newly re-signed Reggie Lewis and newly resurrected Kevin Gamble—seem as if they can be big-time NBA players. The laughs are back. The up-tempo, running style of Celtics basketball is back.

"We're only one player away from a championship," superstar Bird says with a broad smile. He pauses for effect. "Magic Johnson or Michael Jordan."

There are asterisks galore to go with the early success—games against poor teams, games against good teams when some of the good teams' major people have been hurt—but 12–3 is still 12–3, and there have been some nice road wins in Chicago and New York. A few months ago, this was a team without a coach, without Shaw, seemingly without a clue. The season was projected as a long, disheartening drone to be heard across the New England landscape. The headlines would come from the offices of lawyers and agents. The old names would gather moss and become subjects of sad, where-are-they-now feature stories about living on the wrong side of the standings, tall men clutching their mementos of past glory.

The final taste of the 1989–90 season was a five-game playoff loss to the youthful New York Knicks. After winning the first two games of the series, the Celtics seemed slower and flatter with each succeeding loss to the Knicks. The overwhelming analysis was that the team was dead, gone, written in the past tense. The champions of yore could not even dream of being champions once more.

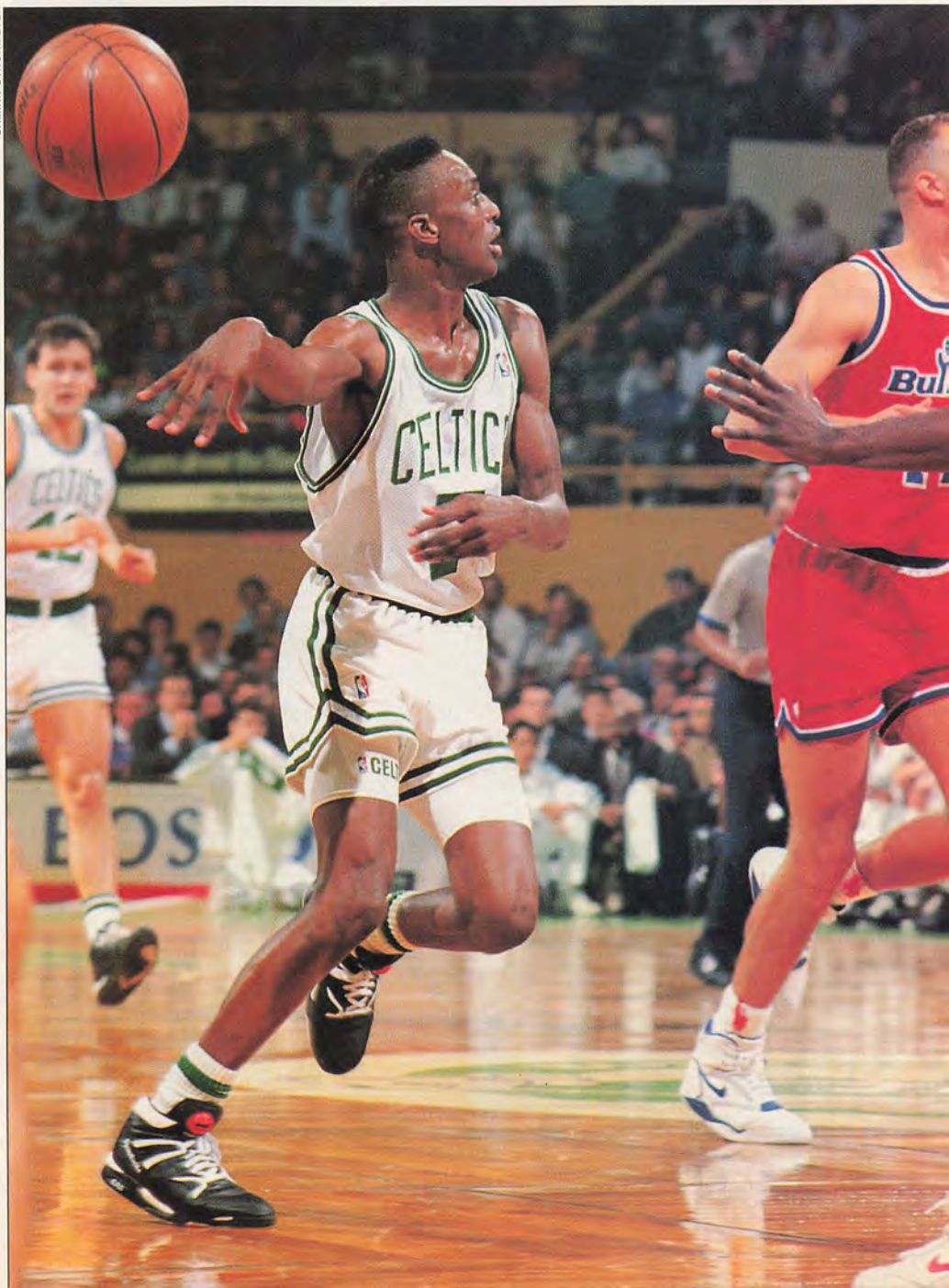
"People forget that we weren't as bad as we ended," McHale says. "We did win 52 games. But it is true that we weren't ready to go for a championship. We weren't ready for the Pistons last year. We couldn't have handled them."

The coach, Jimmy Rodgers, was fired.

Dishing it off artfully is second nature to Bird (opposite), and now young Brown (below), the 19th pick in the draft, is following suit.

Dave Gavitt, the head of the Big East conference, was hired as vice-president in charge of basketball operations. A sequence of un-Celtic-like events evolved. Ford, a longtime assistant, was named coach only after Duke's Mike Krzyzewski declined the job. Shaw, who had left to play in Italy for a season after his rookie year, suddenly balked at returning to Boston despite a new contract he had signed with the Celtics. Lewis said he would be leaving, too, at the end of the season because his contract was inadequate. What was happening here? Had somebody thrown away Auerbach's *Guide to NBA Success and Skulduggery*? Was the par-

DAMIAN STROHMEYER



NATHANIEL BUTLER/NBA PHOTOS

Lewis, who re-upped after some discord, is a speedster who can put up points in bunches.

quet floor going to be next, cut into so many tops for end tables? Were the flags on the ceiling of the Boston Garden going to be hung upside down? What?

"What did I know?" Gavitt says now. "This was all new to me. But handling these problems was why I was hired."

After he signed Ford, Gavitt's first decision had to do with whether or not there was still enough life in his three old-timers to build around them. He decided there was. If there wasn't, then why were other teams trying to trade for them? Isn't basketball still a big man's game? Weren't these three premier big men?

"The aircraft carrier is still the biggest ship in the fleet," he says. "Our decision was that our aircraft carriers were fine. We needed some escort ships."

One escort was Brown, a 6′ 1″ guard from Jacksonville, taken with the 19th pick in the draft. Another was Shaw, the legal fight won in the courtroom and the diplomatic skirmish won in quiet conversation. Lewis had a change of heart and was quickly re-signed. A third escort. Gamble was a fourth, a freestyle shooter who would be helped immediately by a faster, more open game. Room was opened on the floor with the release of veteran guards Dennis Johnson and Jim Paxson. The runners now had a place to run. They also had a system.

The only place Ford ever had been a head coach was at Lynnfield (Mass.) Middle School, coaching his oldest son's junior high team. The team had won some Christmas tournaments. The team had run. The Celtics' operation had switched to a slow-down, post-up game because of the personnel. The new personnel could bring back the old theories of speed and pressure defense. Celtics theories. Lynnfield Middle School theories.

"It's funny," Ford says. "My son has moved along to high school. But my daughter, she's in middle school now. I was going to coach the girls' team. My wife is going to do it now. I might help once in a while."

The mix of backcourt youth and frontcourt experience showed possibilities from the beginning. Bird seemed particularly helped by the changes. Ford moved him from the quick forward to the power forward in the basic offense. Bird announced he was going to become a re-

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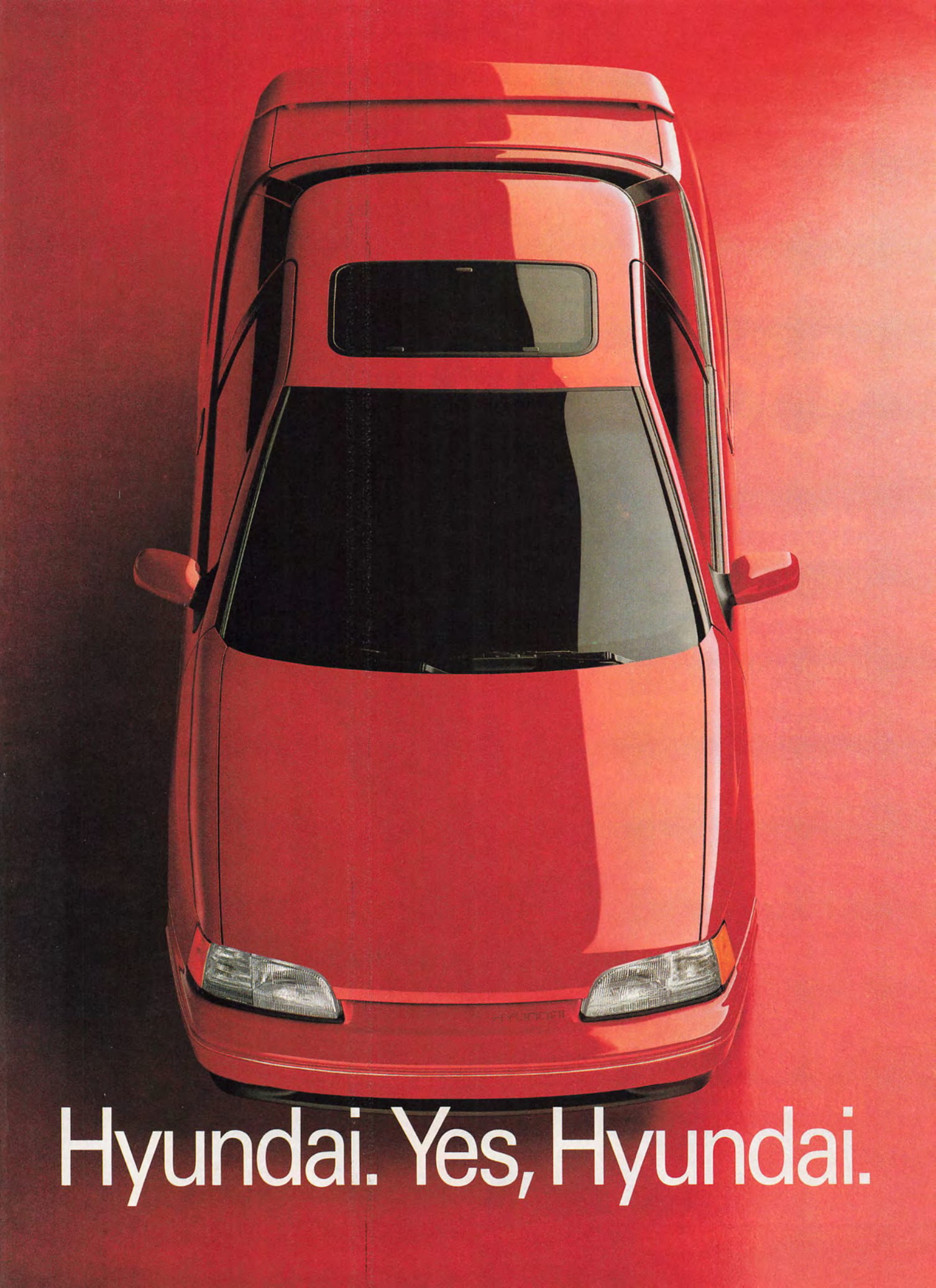
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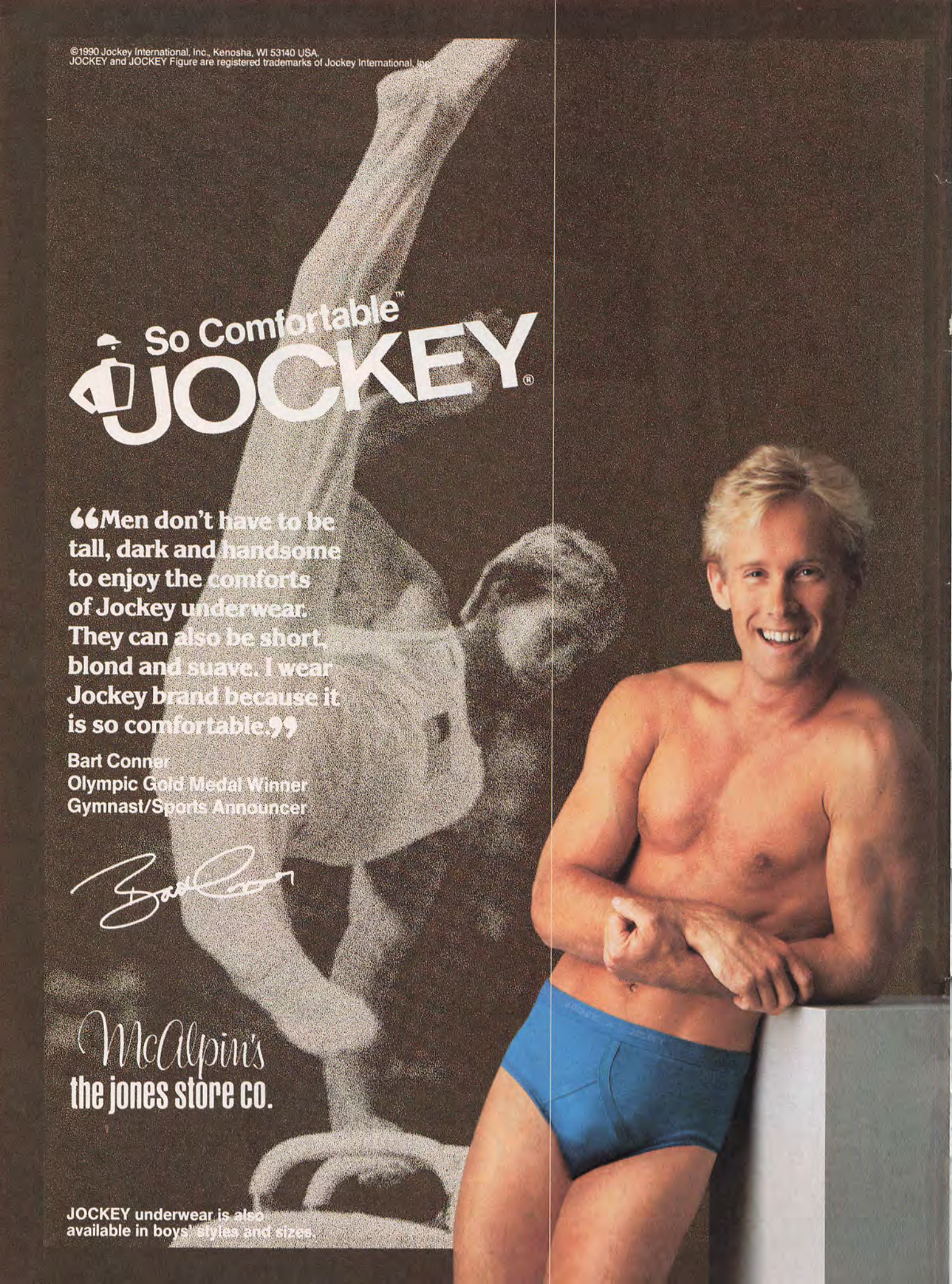

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bounder, first of all, a passer second, and a shooter last. He's now leading the team in scoring (20.3 points per game) and he's tied with Parish in rebounding (9.7 per game). He is the fourth man down the floor on the fast break instead of the third, almost a second point guard. McHale (19.7 ppg) and Parish (13.9) are keeping the pace.

"Everyone kept talking about speed, speed, but it isn't so much about speed as it is motion," Gavitt says. "We have people moving. A year ago, we had people standing around. Now we have people moving. We might be doing the same things, but they look different because we have motion. On defense is where we're really helped. We can slow other people down with a press, make them walk the ball up. They don't have as much time to work their offense. Our frontcourt guys can be set up better to defend."

"That's the luxury the young guys give you, that one step more on defense that maybe changes the angle just enough so you can block a guy's shot instead of watch him score a basket," McHale says. "What we have going for us is a nice little blend. I think you need a blend. Robert, Larry and I can still play. If you go into some other coach's locker room before a game, I'll bet he mentions all three of us in the first few paragraphs of his talk before the game. Youth is fine, but you also need experience in this league. You want to see youth? Go to Charlotte."

The final escort for the aircraft carriers, the 6′ 5″ Gamble, is a third-year pro only two seasons removed from the Continental Basketball Association. After trying veteran Ed Pinckney and 1989 No. 1 draft choice Michael Smith as starters at quick forward—McHale now comes off the bench in various capacities—Ford gave Gamble a shot. This was in the seventh game of the season. The Celtics were 8–0 with him in the lineup until they lost 116–110 to the Philadelphia 76ers on Saturday night at the Spectrum. Gamble is averaging 12.1 points per game, but has an average of 13.8 since he became a starter.

"We're still evolving," Ford says. "Everybody will make changes before the end of the season. Everybody makes changes every night. How good we'll be, I don't know. I just like what I've seen so far. I like the effort."

Aircraft carriers Parish, Bird and McHale at last have some escort vessels around them.

NATHANIEL BUTLER/NBA PHOTOS

Shaw came back after a year in Italy and found Boston had rediscovered its winning attitude.

Strangely enough, the loss in Philadelphia seemed as encouraging as any of the wins. The game was one of those headline nights, the first matchup of the season between the Atlantic Division rivals. It was won basically by Sixer forward Charles Barkley, who had 13 rebounds, eight assists and 37 points on 16-for-23 shooting. The Celtics hung close. They were behind by 10 points at the half, then scored the first 10 points of the third period to tie the game. It was 96–96 with 6:32 left before Barkley sprinted once more. The Celtics were good again on the road. How much better will they be later, when they work out all the wrinkles of this new operation?

"One thing I know is this team has a different attitude than it did before I went to Italy," Shaw says. "Everybody is different, a lot more loose. A lot of that I give to Chris. He's a stern guy, but at the same time he's fun-loving. He yells and screams, but he makes us understand it's a game more than a job. It can be fun."

"A key is that we have guys here with the right attitude," Bird says. "Last year, we had some problems. Guys wanted more playing time. Guys were smirking, here and there. There's none of that this year. Guys want to play."

There are no grand predictions so far, only the early, positive results. Will the results continue? Will Bird—who scored his 20,000th point last week in a 123–95 win over Washington to make him one of only five NBA players with 20,000 points and 5,000 assists—be able to stay in one piece? Will the young guards continue to improve? Will Parish and McHale stay healthy? Will help arrive from what has been a short bench? Will the season be too long? What?

Blurry.

Will Rebecca fall, at last, a final time for Sam? Will Cliff survive the Christmas postal rush? Will Norm, for once, go home? Will Carla take a self-improvement course? Frasier? Lilith? All that is certain is that there once again is a strong urge to tune in tomorrow to see. ■

STEVE LIPOFSKY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CARYN LEVY

DUSTBUSTERS

The U.S. cleaned up on some indoor dirt to win the Davis Cup

BY CURRY KIRKPATRICK

WHETHER BUILDING A RED clay tennis court, hidden away from the glorious Florida sunshine inside a domed stadium, to ensure victory in the Davis Cup finals was a bigger crime against nature than Philip Agassi's astounding new wig became a moot question last weekend, when the United States of America finally won the thing. Not the hairpiece, the Davis Cup. It had been eight long years, but the way the U.S. team—composed of Andre ("Let's dance") Agassi, Phil's exquisitely coiffed little brother; Michael Chang, who is merely little; Rick Leach; Jim Pugh; and Lee ("Proud to be an American") Greenwood—celebrated, one would have thought that 800 years had gone by since the country had prevailed.

The final score was U.S. 3, Australia 2, Greenwood 47. Although Greenwood, a country and western singer, wasn't there in the flesh at St. Petersburg's intimate 50,000-seat (but only 20,000 for tennis) Suncoast Dome, he was there in voice: Forty-seven was the approximate number of times Greenwood's patriotic anthem, *God Bless the U.S.A.*, was played over the loudspeakers throughout the weekend, reviving a jingoism that hadn't been seen on domestic sports battlefields since the 1984 Summer Olympics.

Whoo, boy! You think Andre and the other U.S. giants could have beaten the Aussies without such flag-waving? O.K., how about without the U.S. Tennis Association's having installed that bogus dust-to-dust surface in the dome? It would have been nice to see the U.S. try to win on something normal. After all, Agassi had just won the ATP Tour World Championship on indoor carpet in Germany, beating the two best players in the world, Boris Becker and Stefan Edberg, back-to-back. Further, the Australians showed up in St. Pete with a Davis Cup rookie from Tasmania named Richard Fromberg and a still-gimpy Pat Cash, who would be limited to doubles. What was everybody—read: the USTA—so terrified about?

Nobody asked the Agassi boys how they liked the musical interludes spicing up the first Davis Cup finals in the U.S. since 1981 (America 3, Argentina 1, in Cincinnati). As most television viewers know, Andre is a Red Hot Chili Peppers man, that being the backup band on his newest rock-'n'-roll-and-tennis-shoe video. Phil is a fan of late '50s music, judging from his spectacularly inventive Fabian-does-Julio-of-Tuscaloosa's-perm-curls new look. Instead, the younger Agassi, who makes a living at tennis, was kept busy giving answers about the surface, and the older Agassi, who makes a living *around* the game, was kept busy planting the questions.

After acknowledging that the Americans had gone out of their way "to create a scenario to give us the best chance to win," Andre made his case. "We've played all over the world," he said. "You want to see unfair? Go to the stadiums where they pound the drums." And all the time, thanks to those Nike commercials, you thought this guy liked tennis *loud*.

While it is true that American teams have been repeatedly abused on foreign soil by thieving linesmen and ornery crowds, shouldn't the USTA stand above petty connivery? And shouldn't the opponent—Australia, an honored tennis rival since early in the century and the most sportsmanlike nation on earth—have been considered in the mix? The scenario Andre Agassi referred to evolved like this. Following the U.S.'s semifinal defeat of Austria on red clay in Vienna in September, America's captain, Tom Gorman, discovered that a clay court—a European clay court, at that—could be set down in the Suncoast Dome. Clay is not only Agassi's and Chang's best surface but also Australia's worst, and only the 20-year-old Fromberg had enjoyed any kind of success on the slow stuff.

The USTA didn't decide to go with red clay until Oct. 11, nine days after it had been required to announce its surface se-

On Friday, Agassi (left) narrowly escaped getting chewed up by a Tasmanian devil named Fromberg, but Chang jumped all over Cahill.

lection. The lateness of the decision, coupled with the surface itself, raised the considerable ire of longtime Aussie captain Neale Fraser, who pointed out that the rules stipulate that the surface must be "in general use" in the country where the tie is played. So the USTA canceled an order for German clay and ordered 170 tons (two courts' worth) of a good domestic '90 burgundy from Plant City, Fla. It still wasn't green Har-Tru, an ersatz clay that is prevalent in the U.S. and is somewhat faster than the imported brand. And it certainly wasn't a surface on which pro tennis is played in America. It was, admitted Agassi, "something similar to a beach." But, hey, who cares? A 'W' is a 'W,' especially when the Americans hadn't had one in the finals since they whipped France in Grenoble in '82.

"This is an embarrassment to the USTA," said Cash. And that was before he got a couple of bad bounces in a practice match and smashed several rackets to smithereens. "Aw, Cashy gets frustrated even on his own court at home," Fraser would say later.

As either a player or a coach, Fraser has been part of eight winning Davis Cup teams, and in both 1959 and '60 he won the singles, doubles and mixed-doubles crowns at Forest Hills. He is a feisty sort, who last week complained about the arena, the match scheduling, the works. "The lighting is not uniform," Fraser said. "And it's colder in here than [when we arrived]. They've obviously turned on the air conditioner. I've been in a lot of Davis Cup finals, and everything is spot-on. But here, things are just not spot-on."

The ESPN-dictated starting time of 5 p.m. for the first of Friday's two singles matches, followed by doubles on Saturday at 1, was especially galling to Fraser. He said the scheduling forced him to change his lineup. "We've talked and argued, and everybody knows it [the schedule] is wrong," he said. "So we have to wait until 1991 to get back to some sanity." (As of next year, there must be at least 22 hours between the start of the singles and the start of the doubles.)

Fraser's decision to name Darren Cahill and Fromberg in singles and let Cash concentrate on doubles, with partner John Fitzgerald, was a bold gamble. Not only did the move deprive Australia of having Cash, the 1987 Wimbledon champion and his team's spiritual leader, stare down Agassi and Chang, but it also meant the Aussies' best doubles pair, Cahill and Mark Kratzmann, who won three tournaments this year, would not play. "The timing of the matches makes it impossible now for the second guy in singles to get up the next day and play doubles," said Cash.

At a press conference following last Thursday's draw for the singles pairings, which was held under a scalding sun at the Pier in downtown St. Pete, Fromberg, a curly-haired son of an accountant from New Town, Tasmania, seemed out of his element. "I've got nothing to lose," said Fromberg, who is ranked 33rd in the world. "Andre has a tendency to feel the pressure."

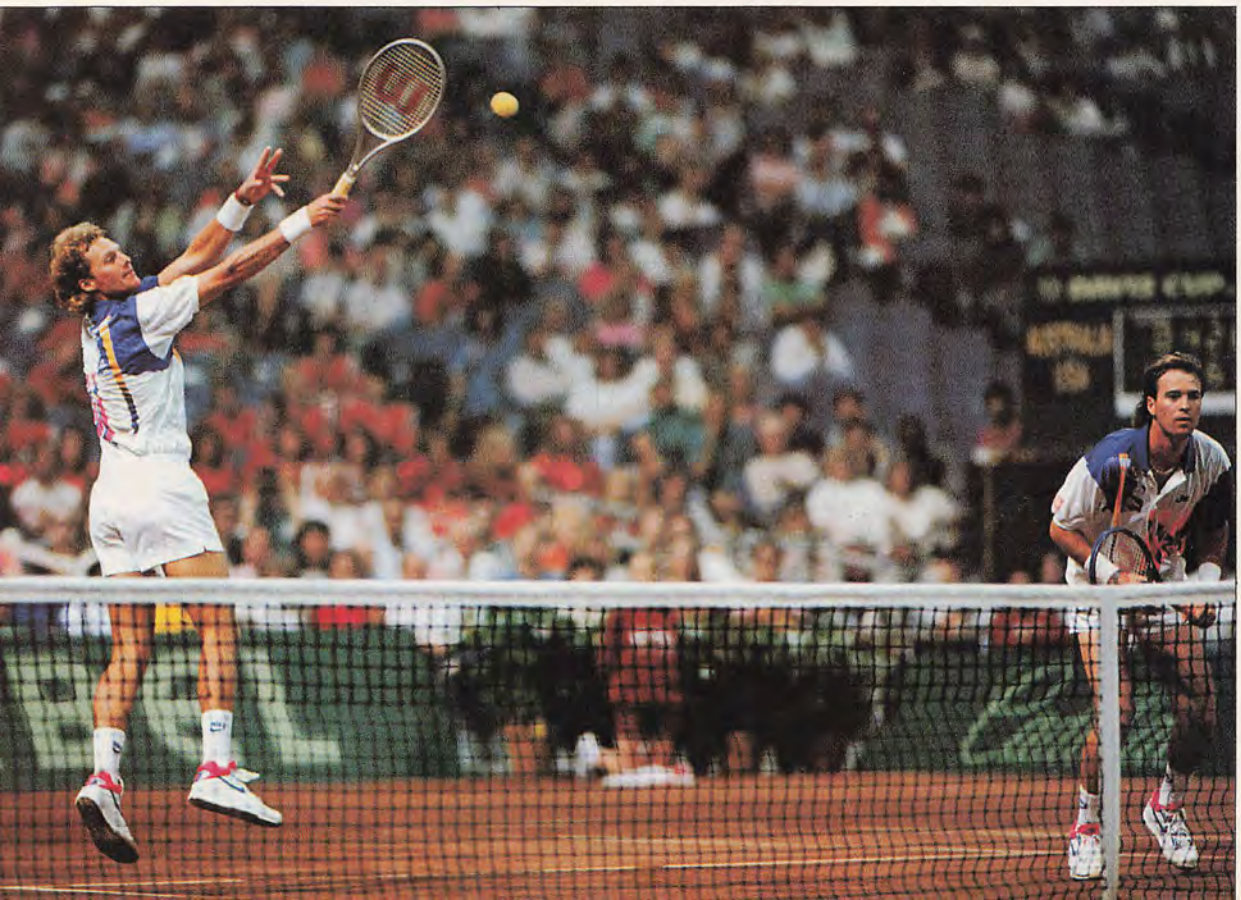
Agassi lost to Fromberg in Cincinnati in August, after which he ever-so-graciously said he "couldn't get up for guys like this."

As if the duke of diplomacy and the USTA had not been party to enough shenanigans, they immediately became accomplices in another bizarre incident. Brad Gilbert, who played singles for the U.S. in early-round victories over Mexico and Czechoslovakia this year, had been flown to St. Petersburg as the USTA's designated color analyst for the ESPN telecasts. He was standing at the rear of the press conference, in his USA team sweat suit, when Phil Agassi—"the Persian Rug," Pat Calabria of *New York Newsday* took to calling him—stopped preening long enough to whisper in Gilbert's ear. Gilbert, in the guise of a member of the media, then raised his hand and asked Phil's brother, "Andre, do you think if this match were held outdoors, there would be all this controversy over playing on clay?"

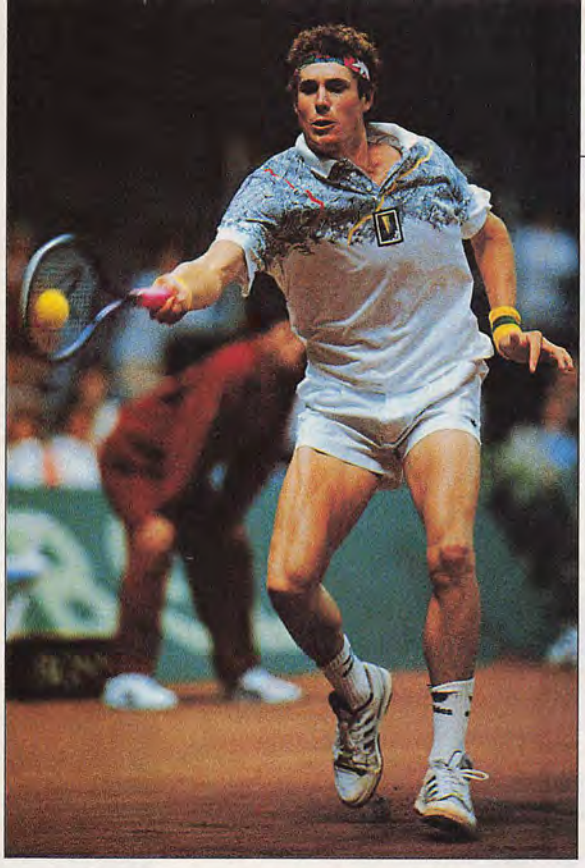
To which Andre replied, "You know, Brad, that's a good question. People go off on tangents reacting to the idea of playing clay indoors. If we had played this outdoors, they would accept it more."

A memo to the USTA: Please leave the plants in the press room to the horticultural committee.

No, John McEnroe was not flown in by the USTA to cover the tie for *The Malibu Beach-*



After Pugh (left) and Leach won, the Davis Cup belonged to the U.S for the first time since '82.



Fromberg had Agassi's number until the rules said he had to stop.

comber. But yes, Agassi nearly suffered another stunning Davis Cup defeat. (Thomas Muster upset him in straight sets in the Austrian tie.) Not that Fromberg was any pushover. He's tall, stiff and gangly, but he had used his big serve and forehand and some very un-Australian-like patience at the baseline to win two clay-court tournaments this year.

Frommy, as his mates call him, set Agassi back on his neon-lime heels, taking a 6–4, 2–6, 6–4 lead into the 10-minute break. But Fromberg had never experienced this sort of timeout, which is the rule in Davis Cup competition but nowhere else. How could he have? This was his first Cup match. "I got cold," he said later. "I would rather have continued, because I just wasn't used to stopping."

Agassi jumped on Fromberg after the intermission, winning 11 of 15 games to win the fourth set 6–2 and go up 5–2 in the fifth. "He looked like he had nothing left," said Agassi afterward.

Fromberg, however, struck back, winning nine straight points before Agassi served out the match at 5–4. "I thought I was a bit unlucky; I thought Andre played about as well as he could play," said Fromberg, who was as astonished as everybody else to hear Agassi say at the postmatch press conference that he was suffering from a "horrible virus," that he had "not eaten for three days" and that his muscles hurt so much he "couldn't roll over in bed."

Strangely, Agassi had not required a doctor. But he said he had almost pulled out of the tie and had asked Gorman to get alternate Aaron Krickstein ready to play in his place. Of course, everybody heard all of this from Andre. "Even when I'm weak, I guess I'm less tired than him [Fromberg]," said Agassi. "No question. I didn't win it with tennis. It was something else—just guts."

"Just rubbish," said Fromberg. "I didn't see him sick during the match."

A more thorough investigation was unavailing, even though Agassi was seen at one o'clock on Saturday morning, entourage-encircled, chowing down at a Bennigan's. The poor thing was obviously too sick to be interviewed.

As for the tennis competition, it pretty much began and ended with the Agassi-Fromberg match. In the second singles, Chang routed Cahill 6–2, 7–6, 6–0 in about 15 minutes. For those who believed that Cash would have been tougher stew, he was woefully off form in the doubles. Although he's only 25, Cash's marvelous athletic gifts have eroded beyond his years. The spirit seems unquenchable, but the Achilles operation he had in 1989 has cost him valuable steps and flexibility. While Fitzgerald, a doubles specialist who has won all four Grand Slam titles, fought gamely, Cash's slow start enabled the Greater Los Angeles/Southern Californian/All-Freeway/All-Beach/All-American team of Leach and Pugh to break serve in the first game of the first two sets and win a 6–4, 6–2, 3–6, 7–6 Cup-clinching victory.

In the middle of the fourth set, the crowd of 18,000—part of the three-day total of 52,000, the highest in Davis Cup history in the U.S.—started a wave through the cavernous Suncoast Dome. At that point Leach said he felt a "calming feeling." That was only fitting, because Leach and Pugh have been the calm in the midst of the U.S. Davis Cup team storm all year long. Even one of Sunday's meaningless reverse singles matches was tempestuous. After having evened the score with Cahill at one set apiece, Agassi quit, claiming he had strained a muscle in his chest. The Aussies were skeptical. "He didn't look injured to me, hitting those groundstrokes," said Cahill. "Andre is a great player, but what comes out of his mouth is of little significance. I wouldn't want him on [our] team. We have a tradition; we go down fighting."

Cash said that he can hardly wait for a rematch with the U.S. in next year's finals. Should such a tie eventuate, it would take place Down Under. "We'll probably have to play on some weird, exotic surface, like grass," said Gorman.

And, one hopes, in a Davis Cup competition in which everything will be a bit more spot-on. ■

Before the matches got under way, Chang was all business, while Agassi had all the answers.

REBEL REPRIEVE

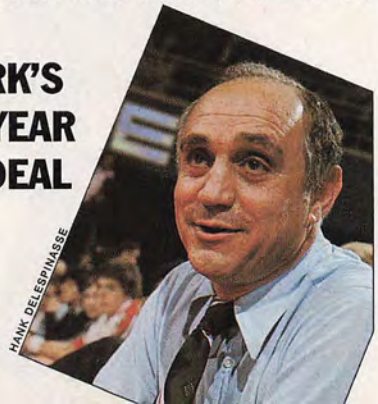
In a turnaround, the NCAA lets UNLV defend its title

BY WILLIAM F. REED

UP UNTIL THE VERY MOMENT THE bombshell hit, you could have searched the world of college athletics and not found a soul who seriously believed the NCAA would let Nevada–Las Vegas and its basketball coach, Jerry (the Shark) Tarkanian off the hook. After all, how could the NCAA back off after a fanatical, 13-year quest that made captain Ahab's little adventure seem like a day at the beach? After so many years and so much court-clogging litigation, the NCAA last July had finally been able to stick Tarkanian where it hurt most, by denying his splendid reigning national championship team the right to defend its title because of recruiting violations that occurred 13 years ago, when the current Runnin' Rebel players were barely out of diapers.

That penalty struck many observers as unfair to the players, but the NCAA only shrugged and pointed at Tarkanian for taking his case to court instead of taking his medicine those many years ago. But last Thursday, in what has to rank as the most shocking upset in college basketball history, the NCAA's Committee on Infractions announced that it had changed its mind about keeping the Rebels out of the 1991 tournament and was instead offering UNLV two options: 1) Tarkanian would be suspended from coaching during the '91 tournament and the Rebels would sit out the tournament in '92, or 2) UNLV would be banned from live tele-

TARK'S 13-YEAR ORDEAL


HANK DELESPINASSE

AUG. 25, 1977

The NCAA announces a two-year probation against UNLV for recruiting violations committed between '71 and '75.

SEPT. 7, 1977

UNLV president Dr. Donald Baepler suspends Tarkanian.

SEPT. 8, 1977

Tarkanian files suit against UNLV and later adds the NCAA as a defendant.

SEPT. 26, 1977

Clark County (Nevada) District Judge James Brennan issues a permanent injunction preventing UNLV from suspending Tarkanian.

RICHARD MACKSON

Johnson (far right) and mates had more to celebrate last week than just a win over UAB.

vision appearances in the '91–92 season and from the '92 tournament. School president Robert Maxson says Tarkanian, athletic director Dennis Finfrock and university lawyers needed "about 30 seconds" to select the second alternative.

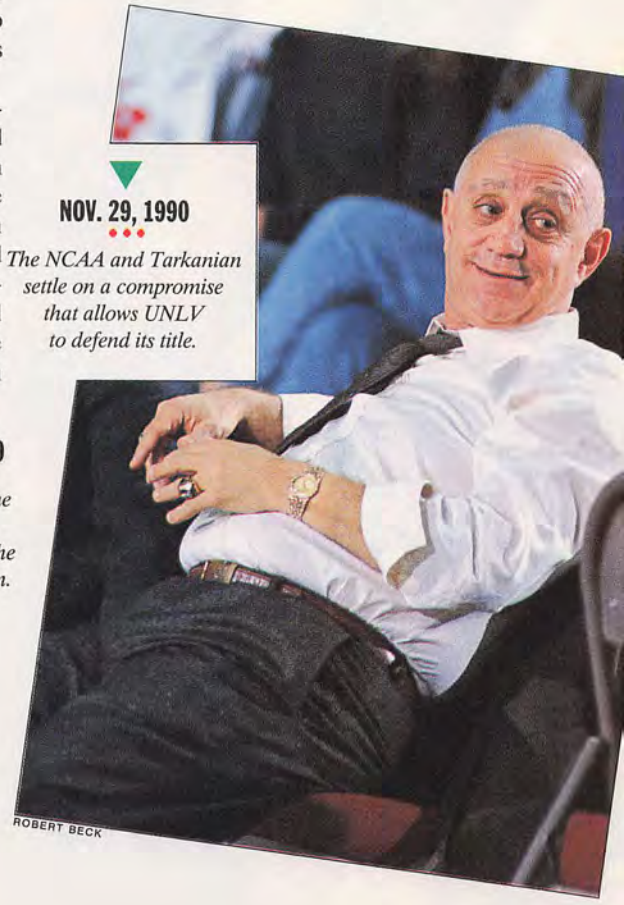
When news of the NCAA's decision reached Maxson's office, fans standing in his reception area cheered, and Maxson said, "I give the NCAA [committee members] credit for their fairness when there's no question they knew other institutions would raise questions." Raise questions? Raise hell is more like it. Although some coaches and administrators agreed with UC Santa Barbara coach Jerry Pimm, who said, "It was good to see some compassion" from the NCAA's four-member infractions committee, many more accused the NCAA of hypocrisy, greed, inconsistency, unfairness and all-around weenieness, not to mention of applying a double standard.

The atmosphere was especially volatile at Kansas, Missouri, Florida, Kentucky, Illinois, Maryland, Houston and other schools that are currently on NCAA probation in either basketball or football for various rules violations, or have been on probation in the recent past. "I sure wish they'd given us a multiple-choice penalty," said angry Kansas coach Roy Williams, whose 1988–89 team wasn't allowed to defend its NCAA title because of transgressions committed under previous coach Larry Brown. Former Jayhawk guard Milt Newton called the NCAA "gutless and spineless." Newton, who is currently working on his master's degree at Kansas, says, "They tried to make an example out of us. Now, we're a wasted example." Added Missouri coach Norm Stewart, whose team was hit last month with two years' probation, including no tournament appearance this season, "It's a total farce."

The most popular theory about the infractions committee's unprecedented change of heart was that it simply caved in before the growing clamor against the NCAA. In six states—Nebraska, South Carolina, Missouri, Illinois, Florida and California—legislation has been introduced or at least discussed that would force the NCAA to drastically change the way it conducts its investigations, which have always been behind closed doors. In addition, U.S. Congressman Tom McMillen (D., Md.), deploring what he calls the NCAA's "school-yard-bully tactics," has enlisted the support of 31 colleagues for a bill that would require the NCAA to grant due process to individuals accused of wrongdoing.

However, Alan Williams, the University of Virginia history professor who is chairman of the infractions committee, denies that the members (the others are SEC commissioner Roy Kramer, Notre Dame head of student affairs Patricia O'Hara and Arizona State law professor Milton Schroeder) were intimidated by the politicians or by the threat of a lawsuit by some of the Vegas players. "That had nothing to do with it," says Williams, "except that [UNLV] feels, and a number of its players expressed, that they might well have gotten in the tournament anyway, by tying up the NCAA in court. But that didn't affect us one way or another."

Hmmmmm. Maybe not. But many observers believe that the NCAA has only opened up a can of worms and caused more problems for itself. Now every school that gets slapped with penalties can attempt to plea-bargain, citing the Vegas situation as a precedent. "I would anticipate that everyone might try it," says Williams, "but I would also anticipate that the committee would find no room to


ROBERT BECK

NOV. 29, 1990
The NCAA and Tarkanian settle on a compromise that allows UNLV to defend its title.

OCT. 28, 1990
UNLV offers the NCAA four alternatives to the tournament ban.

JULY 20, 1990
The NCAA bans UNLV from the '91 NCAA tournament.

DEC. 12, 1988
The U.S. Supreme Court upholds the NCAA's right to discipline its members.

AUG. 27, 1987
The Nevada Supreme Court upholds Goldman's ruling.

JUNE 25, 1984
State of Nevada Court Judge Paul Goldman rules that the NCAA violated Tarkanian's due process rights.

change penalties. It isn't a precedent-setter, because there's no other case like it, and there can be no other case like it."

There Williams has a point.

The NCAA's obsession with Tarkanian goes back to the early 1970s, when his program at Long Beach State was investigated. The Shark got out of town a step ahead of the posse, leaving his successor, Lute Olson, to endure the consequences—three years' probation for the 49ers. The NCAA bloodhounds followed Tarkanian to Las Vegas. In '77, after the Rebels had reached that year's Final Four, the NCAA found UNLV guilty of recruiting and organizational violations, and hit the Rebels with a stiff probation that kept them off TV and out of postseason play for two seasons, '77–78 and '78–79.

In addition—and this is the crux of the current row—the NCAA asked UNLV to show cause why the university shouldn't take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action against the head basketball coach, and the committee would determine if it was appropriate. The NCAA let it be known that it wanted the school to suspend Tarkanian for two seasons.

Tarkanian responded to the order by going to the Nevada district court and getting two injunctions—one against the university, preventing UNLV from suspending him, and another, against the NCAA, preventing them from ordering his suspension. So began the long court battle between the NCAA and Tarkanian that wound up in the U.S. Supreme Court, which on Dec. 12, 1988, ruled in a 5–4 decision that the NCAA, as a private organization of voluntary members, had every right to make UNLV show cause why Tarkanian shouldn't be punished.

Predictably, the Nevada district court took its sweet time—more than 15 months—dissolving Tarkanian's injunction against the NCAA. When that finally occurred, on March 26 of this year, exactly one week before Larry Johnson, Stacey Augmon and their UNLV teammates smashed Duke in the national title game, the NCAA renewed its efforts to punish Tarkanian. On July 20 it announced the latest penalty for Tarkanian's long-ago transgressions: His Rebels would not be allowed to participate in postseason play in '91. This placed Johnson and Augmon, both likely NBA first-round picks, in a bind since the NBA's deadline for early-entry candidates had passed. They could have taken their skills to a pro team in Europe or transferred to another school, where they would have been immediately eligible to play. Eventually both opted to remain at UNLV, gambling that the infractions committee would ultimately allow UNLV to defend its title.

Newton, whose team couldn't defend its title, called the NCAA "gutless and spineless."

JOHN BIEVER

Here are the events that lead up to last week's NCAA reversal: In a meeting in Kansas City in June, the infractions committee asked UNLV to do the same thing it had asked 13 years earlier, to show cause why the coach shouldn't be suspended for two years. The university threw itself on the mercy of the committee, saying its hands still were tied by Tarkanian's injunction against it, which remained in effect.

"Our position was that the university had suffered all the penalties," says Maxson. "We didn't know what else to do at that point."

The committee gave UNLV no indication that it might be willing to consider alternative penalties. "By the nature of the show-cause order, [the committee] invited the university to come back with alternative proposals," NCAA spokesman Jim Marchiony said last week. "But [UNLV] didn't. It said, basically, 'Let's let bygones be bygones.' The committee then said, 'That's not good enough. Boom, you're out of here.' "

About a week after the announcement that Vegas would be banned from the 1991 tournament, Tarkanian went to Maxson and for the first time offered to step aside for a time if the infractions committee would consider a compromise that would allow the Rebels to defend their title. After huddling with lawyers and Finfrock, UNLV officials contacted the NCAA and asked for a special hearing on the basis of "new information."

The infractions committee agreed, and the two sides met at Chicago's O'Hare Hilton on Oct. 28. Fittingly, or so it seemed at the time, the meeting was held in the Montgolfier Room, named after the brothers who popularized the hot-air balloon. That's all it would amount to, right? Hot air. Instead, the committee members listened with open minds as Maxson outlined four alternatives, ranging from simply sitting out the 1992 tournament instead of the one in '91 to a complex agreement by which Tarkanian would not coach in the '91 tournament, would forfeit the bonus he would stand to get out of UNLV's share of the tournament revenue and would agree to recruiting limitations. To sweeten the deal, Tarkanian agreed to take no further legal action against either the NCAA or UNLV.

The committee considered the matter, made its historic offer, and—following the Rebels' selection from the two options—everybody was happy. Well, maybe not quite. Up in Vancouver, B.C., where UNLV was preparing to open its season last Saturday against Alabama-Birmingham, Tarkanian indicated that he was not exactly ready to enjoy a nice, relaxing dinner with David Berst, the head of the NCAA's investigative division. "Sometimes I feel the NCAA is the only organization that's above the law," said Tarkanian bitterly.

One reason for Tarkanian's pique is that he knows the NCAA isn't finished with him. Within the next couple of weeks UNLV will receive the NCAA's findings in the sordid matter involving Lloyd Daniels, the celebrated New York City player who signed with Vegas in 1986. Later it was discovered that Daniels, who became the legal ward of a Rebel assistant coach, was virtually illiterate and had a drug problem. Although Tarkanian says UNLV isn't guilty in the Daniels case, the NCAA's harpoon could stick the Shark again. According to Williams, the Daniels decision, whatever it turns out to be, probably won't come down until next summer, so there's no chance that the NCAA will kick the current team out of the 1991 tournament—again.

John Weistart, a Duke law professor and co-author of the authoritative book *The Law of Sports*, says, "This is another situation where one's first impulse—to be cynical—is probably appropriate."

Weistart adds, "It's a hard case, very hard. You can see it as, 'Oh, they really are protecting the interests of the athletes.' Or as, 'The NCAA doesn't want to give up the great hype that's going to come about if UNLV has a chance to defend its national title.' There can be fine lines of wisdom, yes, but it's hard to convince others *why* their cases differ. If an unheralded team now says, 'Hey, we're in the same situation as Vegas!' how do you answer them to their satisfaction?"

BRETT GARLAND

Daniels, a former CBA performer, could bring Tarkanian additional NCAA penalties.

The NCAA's response is that Vegas did, in fact, serve those penalties for two years back in the late 1970s, just as other programs have served their penalties.

The difference in Tarkanian's case was the show-cause order. Also, Williams does not anticipate that the same situation will arise with other schools, because as a result of NCAA legislation that went into effect in 1985, it is now standard in virtually every coach's contract, including Tarkanian's, that he may be fired if his program is found guilty of NCAA violations.

And that's not the only good that has come of the Tarkanian mess. It's healthy that the NCAA is being scrutinized and challenged, just as it's encouraging that more university presidents are bringing their coaches to heel. Also, at least now Augmon and Johnson won't be penalized for staying at UNLV and the other Vegas players will have ample opportunity to transfer, if they want, after this season.

And whither Tarkanian? Good question. In addition to the Daniels case, he may have trouble on other fronts. The Nevada attorney general's office is investigating allegations that individuals have been improperly selling UNLV basketball tickets, an investigation that, according to at least one law enforcement source, possibly involves Tarkanian. There are also suspicions that Tarkanian will bail out after this season and, take your pick, coach a pro team, open a casino or retire. Whatever happens, he will at least have the satisfaction of having the fate of his defending champions decided on the court instead of in the courts.

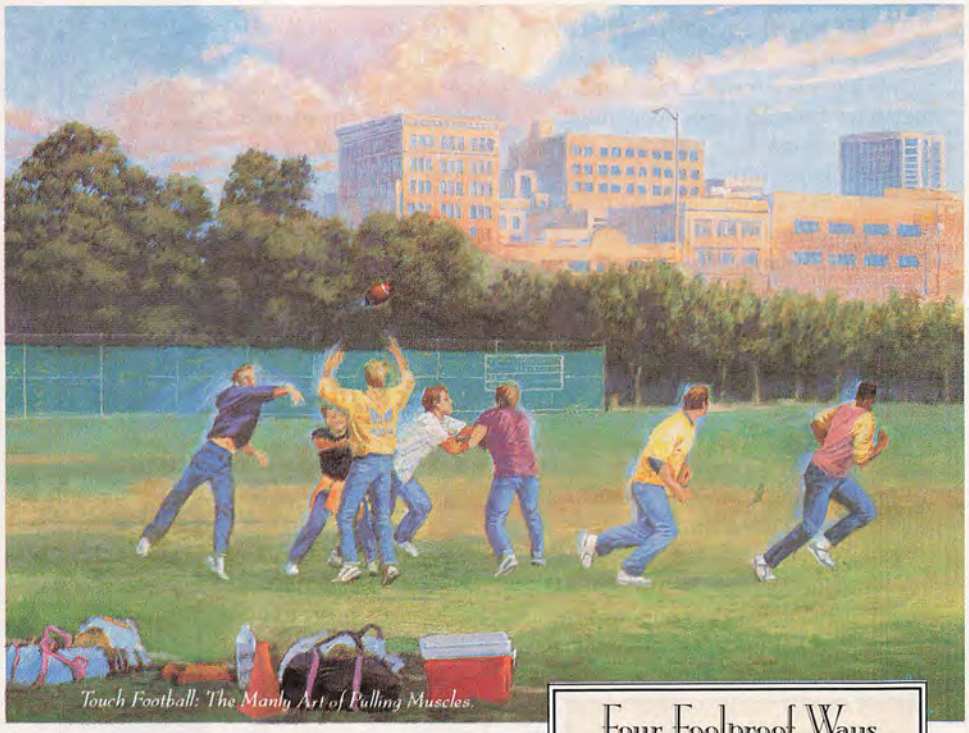
The Rebels celebrated their reprieve by blasting Alabama-Birmingham 109–68 as Johnson scored 26 points and Augmon 19. Now it's up to Arizona, Arkansas and everyone else in college basketball to stop whining about the Rebels and show cause why, come April, UNLV won't win the NCAA's big trophy even more convincingly than it did last season. ■

GREAT AMERICAN SATURDAYS:

Touch Football, The Unwritten Rules.

The Guy Who Brings The Ball Usually Makes The Rules.

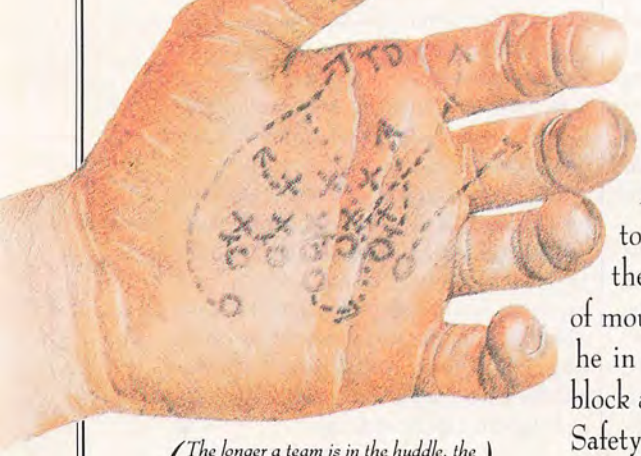
"No tagging above the neck."
"Three Mississippis before rushing the quarterback."
Every guy has weird rules for touch football. Normally they don't affect the outcome of the game. The only risk is if the pigskin owner turns out to be a whiner (see below), gets mad, takes his ball, and goes home. So, rule number one: always bring a spare football.



Touch Football: The Manly Art of Pulling Muscles.

Whoever Whines The Loudest Gets The Call. In Cases Of Equal Whining, The "Play It Over Rule" Is Invoked.

This is one of the more sordid aspects of touch football. Grown men yelling "I got you!" "You did not!" in public. It's embarrassing. What's worse is when they whine so loud that passersby stop and stare, or so long that your legs start to stiffen up. Just when you're about to give up touch football forever, someone finally caves in. For a while, anyway. Whiners (and you know who you are) are everywhere.



(The longer a team is in the huddle, the less likely the play will actually work.)

Four Foolproof Ways To Attract Unwanted Attention.

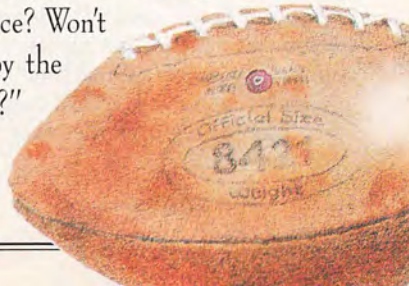
Never, but never:

1. *wear anything matching or white*
2. *wear new shoes, especially soccer shoes*
3. *wear a tasteless lack of stubble*
4. *smell too good.*

Should you commit any of these blatant crimes, your former pals will chase you down and deposit you in the nearest mud puddle or duck pond. You should know better.

Protecting The QB; The Various Levels Of Commitment.

One of the most sacred rules of touch football is: protect the quarterback. At all costs. No matter what. Unless, of course, you find yourself nose-to-nose with a large, dangerous monster. "Wait a minute," you think, "Is not the quarterback a grown-up guy? Is he not quick of foot as well as big of mouth? Can't he fend for himself just this once? Won't he in fact have a much better chance if I decoy the block and slide out into the flats as a safety valve?" Safety valve. Safety valve. It has a nice ring to it.



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A TY VOTE FOR THE HEISMAN

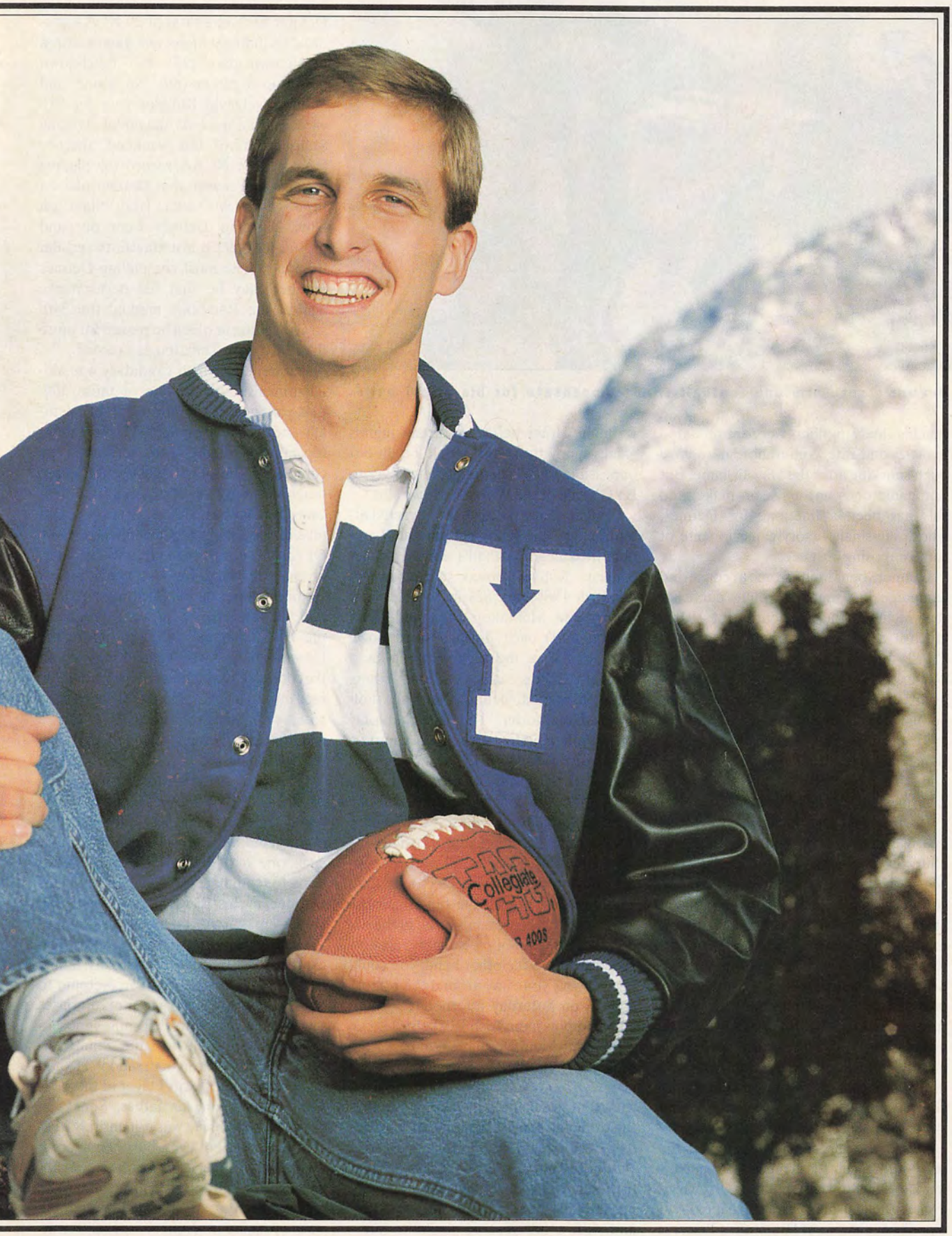
BYU'S TY DETMER BEAT OUT A MUCH FLASHIER RIVAL FOR THE COVETED PRIZE

On the whole, it was a different sort of Heisman Trophy weekend. The fellow from Notre Dame *didn't* get the prize, which went to a quarterback from a conference, the WAC, that had never before produced a Heisman winner. Then, after accepting the award last Saturday, Ty Detmer of Brigham Young went out and celebrated by having one of the worst games of his lustrous career, a 59–28 shellacking by Hawaii. In his first post-Heisman showing, Detmer, a 23-year-old junior, did little to vindicate the voters who had chosen him by a surprisingly wide margin, 1,482 points to 1,177, over the Fighting Irish's Raghib Ismail and Colorado running back Eric Bieniemy (798). He did throw for 319 yards against the Rainbows, thereby breaking the NCAA season record for passing yardage, with 5,188. But he also had four interceptions and was as instrumental in BYU's defeat as he normally is in a Cougar victory. "This is going to be a long flight home," said Detmer after his team's humiliating loss.

The journey from Honolulu to Brigham Young's campus in Provo, Utah, would be about the only yardage Detmer and BYU wouldn't enjoy this season. The critics who insisted that he didn't deserve the Heisman Trophy,

BY RICHARD HOFFER

PETER READ MILLER



The local landscape helped sell outdoorsman Detmer on BYU.

PETER READ MILLER

Detmer's sure arm and football mind compensate for his slight build.

that his gaudy numbers were accumulated in a second-rate conference, may have been smirking after the Hawaii game. But one game does not a season make, and this has been a fine one for Detmer, whose Heisman victory came in spite of some imposing obstacles.

Detmer benefited from a concerted campaign by Brigham Young publicists that included the distribution of 10,000 cloth neckties—dubbed Heisman "Tys"—but he did not have the network TV exposure that a candidate for the award is generally believed to need if he's going to win. The Cougars appeared only twice on network TV (and twice on national cable), but that would seem hardly enough exposure to overcome the secrecy that normally attends events in the WAC.

It's true that Detmer could be viewed nearly every weekend on the Church Satellite System, a network created to link Mormon church houses all around the country to the religion's semiannual general conferences in Salt Lake City. (Mormon joke: How can you recognize a Latter-day Saints church? By its satellite dish.) The system not-so-coincidentally also carries BYU games. But this exposure, permitted by the NCAA on the grounds that it is "narrowcasting," is largely preaching to the converted. "I don't know that we swung any votes in the church houses," says Brigham Young sports publicist Ralph Zobell.

Up to the moment Detmer won the prize (he received the news from New York's Downtown Athletic Club, which awards the Heisman, via a CBS hookup to a poolside camera at Honolulu's Princess Kaiulani Hotel before Saturday night's game) many thought it would be all but impossible to swing enough votes over to BYU's side of the Wasatch Mountains.

Cougar quarterbacks have attracted attention over the years, but not much support in college football's annual beauty contest. Robbie Bosco twice finished third (in 1984 and '85) in the Heisman voting. Jim McMahon ('81) and Marc Wilson ('79) each finished third once. And in '83, in the highest finish by a Brigham Young athlete, Steve Young came in second, behind Nebraska tailback Mike Rozier. The fact that only McMahon among those BYU quarterbacks advanced to NFL stardom seemed to confirm the wisdom of the voting.

Detmer was widely considered to be another Cougar automaton—a long-shot junior trailing another junior, Ismail, for sure. Ismail is a so-called all-purpose runner who produced more electricity than anything else. For all the fun Ismail has been to watch, he was only ninth in the nation in his most telling category, all-purpose yards. On the other hand, you could hardly work your way around the remote control on Saturday afternoons without coming upon some Irish Rocketry.

But in the end Detmer's numbers were simply too prodigious to ignore. If you had been a voter, you could have quibbled with BYU's schedule or taken issue with the Cougar offensive formula, which gives its quarterback a million throws a game. But those numbers just kept rising, finally breaking over the wall of skepticism. Going into the final game of this season—and with a full year of eligibility left—Detmer had set a total of 29 NCAA records, including consecutive games with a touchdown pass (23) and touchdown passes in a career (86). No sooner did Houston's David Klingler pass for 716 yards during a 62–45 defeat of Arizona State in Tokyo last weekend, thereby breaking the NCAA record for passing yardage in a season that Detmer had set in a 45–10 win over Utah State on Nov. 24, than Detmer went out and passed for 319 against Hawaii to reclaim the mark. The most compelling Detmer number may be that his performance against the Rainbows marked the 24th straight game in which he passed for more than 300 yards. That, too, is a record.

Detmer's Heisman candidacy was aided immeasurably by one of those 300-plus-yard games—he threw for 406, actually—which came on Sept. 8 against then-top-ranked Miami. That afternoon he completed 38 of 54 passes for three touchdowns in a 28–21 upset of the Hurricanes, and it was no longer possible to dismiss him as a mere regional phenomenon. Of course, it hurt that three weeks later, despite throwing for 442 yards with a sprained finger on his throwing hand, he had five interceptions against Oregon in the 10–2 Cougars' only loss before the Heisman ballots were mailed in. Without that defeat Detmer might have turned the race into a runaway. Nonetheless, enough voters remained faithful as BYU resumed winning and Detmer resumed throwing touchdown passes.

Oh, yes. About those touchdown passes, 41 in all: Why does Detmer, who is barely six feet tall and is said to weigh 175 pounds, immediately rush downfield after each one and deliver celebratory head butts to teammates? "Well, sir," explains Detmer in his Texas drawl, "you can knock 'em down if you hit 'em just right."

Detmer has been an unlikely Heisman candidate ever since he and his family first motored north from San Antonio to Provo, the first stop on a tour of campuses that was supposed to help him choose a college. That was in 1986, the summer after Ty's junior year in high school. He had just been named Texas Player of the Year while playing for his father, Sonny, at Southwest High. He was not entirely a secret to the big colleges, but then again it was early in the recruiting process and nobody had put the full rush on him. The idea of the tour, as Sonny remembers it, was to preempt a senior season of recruit-

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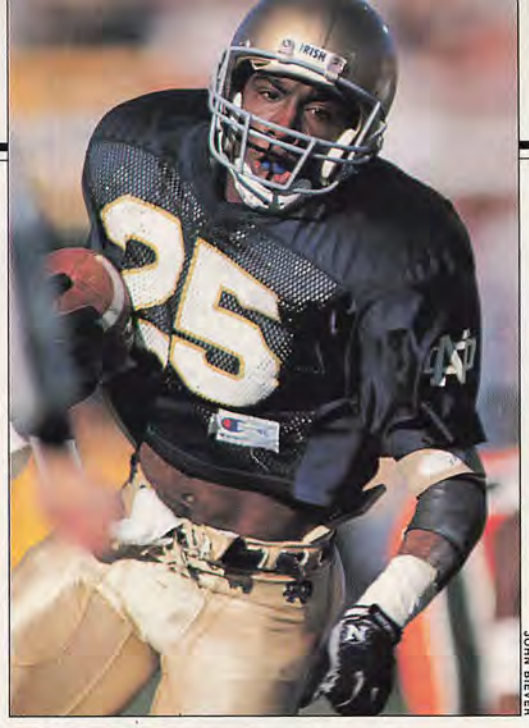

JOHN BIEVER

The voters liked Detmer over Ismail . . .

DAVE BLACK

. . . and Bieniemy of the No. 1 Buffaloes.

ing pitches with a quick strike of their own.

Ty's visit to BYU has grown into comic myth. Some BYU coaches have turned the occasion into a monologue. "Recruit him?" says Norm Chow, the quarterback coach. "You don't know the story? He recruited us!" Head coach LaVell Edwards says, "I'd heard of his numbers [8,005 yards in his high school career], of course, but we hadn't really recruited him, didn't have film on him. So I'm thinking John Elway, and in walks Pee-wee Herman." By now, Edwards has used this line so often that he ought to take up residence in *Pee-wee's Playhouse*.

Ty had seen Bosco go pass-crazy in a televised game, and put BYU on his list of 10 prospective schools. But the clincher was Provo itself. Ty took one look at the rugged wilderness behind the campus and realized how many opportunities it offered for an outdoors enthusiast. Though a Methodist, he felt he could forgo one of his favorite refreshments, iced tea, in accordance with Mormon proscriptions against not only alcohol but also caffeinated beverages. So he committed himself on the spot to BYU.

The way Edwards and Chow tell the tale, there was a lot of head-scratching over Ty's decision. "That seemed kind of easy," Edwards says he told Chow at the time. "Is there something we don't know?" According to the legend, the coaches weren't quite sure about offering Ty a scholarship but decided to, kind of on a whim. The Detmers, meanwhile, cut short their campus tour and spent the rest of their time fishing the Provo River.

As in many tall tales, there is a kernel of truth here. The Detmers did indeed fish the Provo. But assistant coach Claude Bassett, who was actively recruiting Ty, is so weary of this retelling that he actually begins sputtering: "That is so much . . ."—say it, Claude—". . . folklore."

The recruitment story is only one element of the legend that has grown up around Detmer in Provo. Everything but his accomplishments invites caricature. Perhaps overly sensitive to the fact that Detmer will never be mistaken for Troy Aikman in terms of physical stature, university publicists have gone a tad overboard the other way. He's kind of pitiful-looking, they tell you. "You haven't seen him yet?" asks Chow, delighted at the prospect of another opportunity for mistaken identity. Zobell once arranged an interview for an out-of-town reporter and walked into the office to see the reporter totally ignoring Detmer across the room. The reporter thought the slight young man was one of Zobell's student interns. Zobell now offers a helpful identification tip. "He has my Adam's apple," he says.

"Ty Detmer," says Edwards, pretending to think it over, "looks more like Pee-wee. . . ."

The other thing BYU wants you to know is that Detmer can hardly throw that ball. "His passes kind of flutter," says Chow. "Take forever to get there." Wide receiver Andy Boyce admits, "they're not bullets." LaVell, who would you say he throws like? Never mind.

So this is what the Heisman Trophy has come to? The winner is a virtual walk-on, undersized and athletically bankrupt? Well, this is all—say it, Claude—folklore. In truth, Detmer has remarkable skills and abilities. Sonny remembers Ty as a natural athlete who excelled in golf, baseball and basketball, as well as in football. "And he's always been extremely competitive," Sonny says.

As far as coaching young Ty, Sonny says he did nothing extraordinary. "About the only thing I told him was, 'Keep your elbow up.' I remember we'd throw this itty-bitty white plastic ball. He was about one year old, and I'd say, 'Keep your elbow up or I'm going inside.' " Folklore alert! Folklore alert!

Whether it was throwing that itty-bitty ball or simply listening in on the coaching sessions that convened in the Detmer house, young Ty learned something about quarterbacking. When asked how Detmer distinguishes himself from the rest of the BYU breed, Edwards turns serious and taps his head. An admittedly indifferent student—"a bad day hunting is better than a good day of school" is one of Detmer's proverbs—Detmer is a genius at reading defenses and making a very complicated scheme work.

"The BYU system is a good system," says senior running back Matt Bellini. "But I've been here when we didn't have the guy and the system didn't work. It's a tough system to pick up, and Ty picked it up right away. The system depends so much on quarterback decisions, and the other guys couldn't make them quick enough. With Ty, you have to expect the ball every play. It's not a predictable offense with Ty."

And, of course, he can deliver the ball, and without as much wobble as some folks at Brigham Young would have you believe. "He's just so accurate," says Boyce. "He throws the ball in such a great spot every time."

Then there is his relentlessness on the field. "He's taken some crazy hits," says Bellini. "Still, he always releases the ball at the last possible

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second. Once, in the Miami game, he ran out of the pocket, and there were these two guys heading for him from opposite directions. At the last second he took one step forward, they crashed into each other, and he threw a touchdown pass. I've seen some impressive improvisations."

Detmer admits, "It's hard for me to trash a play. I always have a feeling something good might happen. Of course, that's where the interceptions come." Like 28 of them, including two games with five apiece. This would be a shameful statistic anywhere but at BYU, where it's shrugged off. Edwards concedes that logic dictates that a good team should be on the plus side in takeaways. "I don't know why, but we're always on the minus side," he says. "I guess if you throw 50 times a game, that could happen."

Against Utah State, Detmer threw five interceptions, and his pass-efficiency rating actually increased. He was last year's national leader in that category and finished second this season behind Shawn Moore of Virginia.

More impressive than Detmer's creativity and bravery is his leadership. He was providing so much of it so soon that his teammates selected him team co-captain after his sophomore season. He is not afraid to slap a lineman upside the helmet after a busted play or chew somebody out in a huddle. Bellini says, "I missed a blitz once and he got sacked, and he was in my face, barking at me. He's the kind of quarterback that knows everybody else's position too. I'd hoped he wouldn't realize it was my fault."

Detmer, though, is the last one to discuss his on-field talents. He makes no great claims for himself and, on those occasions when he is actually recognized by a reporter, steers conversation toward his hunting exploits. Sound bite from a conference call less than a week before he was given the Heisman: "It's been a pretty good season. I got a mule deer, an elk, some pheasant. . . ." The only thing besides hunting that seems to animate him is talk of BYU pranksterism, which has been refined since Detmer found his way to Provo. "Quality pranks," he says.

Well, you decide if this is quality stuff. "He once put a pig's head under my sheets," says Bellini. Evidently, the house Detmer shares with teammates Scott Charlton, Eric Mortensen and David Henderson and wrestler Rick Evans is the Mormon equivalent of Animal House, a place where the boys will drink a few cups of Postum and head out to egg some teammates' apartment. A lot of poultry has been sacrificed for this kind of fun.

The pig's head, which Detmer stole from a campus luau, was a considerable upgrade in his high jinks. When he first arrived in Provo, Detmer couldn't be counted on to do anything more inventive than douse an unsuspecting teammate with a helmetful of cold water. And there was the time in 1987 when running back Peter Tuipulotu broke his ankle in study hall; Detmer had beaned him with a racquetball, and Tuipulotu had given chase. "There were a lot of people unhappy about that one," Detmer says.

Last season fullback Fred Whittingham's girlfriend left him for a swimmer, and Detmer came to a practice with a picture of the swimmer glued to his helmet. Then again, he's as often the victim of a prank. Recently, at the urging of Detmer's roommates, a blind date conned him into joining her in a photo machine at a K Mart, and the pictures were distributed across the campus in the form of a wedding announcement.

Yet the responsibilities of Heisman candidacy slowed this foolishness some. Says Mortensen, "Now he's famous, and it's hard for him to go egg somebody. Everybody knows Ty's car."

Until last Saturday, Mortensen was referring strictly to Detmer's fame in Provo. After a home game, it can take an hour or more before he can leave the stadium. Outside the locker room will be a crowd of fans, and Detmer will not duck an autograph request. Also, because the school naively published his phone number in the student directory, there is a constant ringing in the house. "I pick it up," says Mortensen, "and nobody says anything. They just want to hear Ty's voice."

Detmer's only escape has been his hunting, for which he is justifiably renowned. At the age of 18 he won the Texas Muy Grande contest, for bagging a 10-point deer with an antler spread of 25¾ inches. This season he was delighted to find that the football team's two off weeks happened to fall during deer- and elk-hunting seasons. It sounds like more folklore, but the story is that he shot his elk, about 600 pounds' worth, with a 30.06 slug right through the heart from a distance of four football fields. Another 400-yard game. The meat rests in a coffin freezer in the living room of Detmer's house, and parts of it will no doubt find their way into Bellini's bed.

After all, who knows how sophisticated these pranks will be by next season? And there will be a next season. Detmer has allowed himself no out on that; he's coming back, and not just to break the NCAA career passing-yardage record (he needs 426 yards to break the mark of 11,425 set by Todd Santos at San Diego State from 1984 to '87). "I committed to the school," Detmer explains. "They've made plans." He said this even before the team's unofficial Heisman ceremony, which was capped—inevitably, you might think— by four teammates hoisting him up and throwing him into the hotel pool. Detmer owes somebody, for sure. ■

Detmer's dunking in Honolulu was typical of Cougar prankishness.

PETER READ MILLER

MEET A DEAD WINNER

He looks healthy, doesn't he? A young athlete who uses anabolic steroids to give himself that extra edge over the competition. Using a drug that is prevalent among sports enthusiasts, even though it is illegal and banned from use.

What this young athlete doesn't know, or prefers to ignore, is that while he appears to be building up his physique, he is destroying his health. He may be on the verge of a heart attack, stroke, cancer, paralysis or any number of severe health problems. Maybe even *suicide*!

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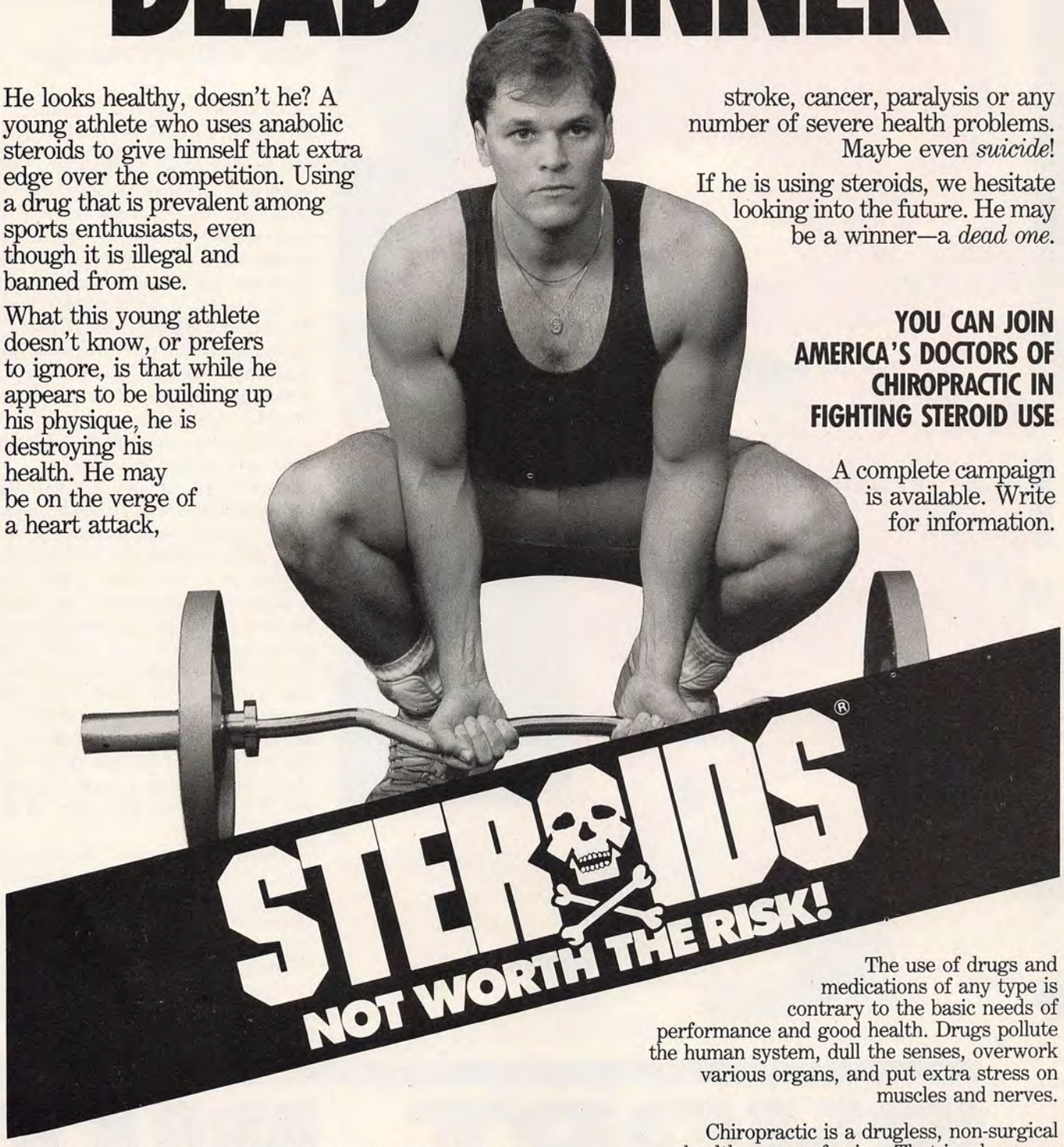

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PAUL BERESWILL

SHORT, BUT

Calgary's Theoren Fleury is the smallest player in the NHL—and one of its most exasperating, too

BY JAY GREENBERG

The smallest player in the NHL, 5′ 6″, 160-pound right wing Theoren Fleury of the Calgary Flames, might be the most obnoxious one too. Unable to find anyone his own size, Fleury picks on players 30 to 50 pounds heavier and half a foot taller. He slashes at their calves, digs his elbows into their ribs and snarls insults, both generic and personal, at their psyches. And as agitated opponents exhaust themselves chasing him, Fleury adds the ultimate insult: He streaks off to score or set up a goal. When you spend your life defying attitudes, you develop one yourself.

In sum, Fleury is not only intolerable, he's also talented. Last season he scored 31 goals despite being used mainly as a third- or fourth-line player. Now he usually plays on Calgary's No. 2 line, with heady center Doug Gilmour and speedy left wing Paul Ranheim, which forms a potent scoring unit. And Fleury's stats show it. Through Sunday he had 13 goals and 16 assists for the Flames, who were second in the Smythe Division. Fleury, 22, has speed as searing as his ambition, a nice touch around the net, playmaking ability and a low center of gravity, which makes it difficult to bump him off the puck.

A tolerance for contact? He thrives on it. He missed only three games in his four junior seasons with the Moose Jaw (Saskatchewan) Warriors and only two since joining the Flames on Jan. 1, 1989. "Sometimes when a big guy hits me," Fleury says, "I'm surprised that I get back up. I think I bounce off because I keep my body tense."

Fleury keeps the guys on the other team tense too. "He's a jerk," says Edmonton Oiler defenseman Jeff Beukeboom, who is 6′ 4″, 215. "He gets under your skin. He's mouthy. He's trying to get you off your game." Last year, when Fleury was slow to allow Beukeboom to climb out of a pileup, Beukeboom took off a glove and punched Fleury in the face. "I didn't have to do that, but it was too good of an opportunity to miss," Beukeboom said, not at all embarrassed about the difference in weight class.

Not that Fleury was discouraged. Fleury is never discouraged. The Flames and the Los Angeles Kings were ready to begin the second overtime in Game 6 of their Smythe Division semifinal playoffs last spring when Doug Risebrough—then Calgary's assistant general manager and now its coach—commended Fleury for his repeated body checks of 6′ 4″, 225-pound defenseman Larry Robinson. "Keep it up," said Risebrough. "He's 38 years old. Let's try to wear him down."

"Yeah," said Fleury eagerly. "Next time I hit him, I'm going to kill him."

Fleury thinks big, plays big and has sometimes talked so big that even his teammates have been angered. After the Flames were upset by the Kings, he and several Calgary teammates went to Bern, Switzerland, to play in the world championships. When Sergei Makarov, one of those teammates, helped key the Soviet Union's 7–1 rout of Canada, Fleury ripped into Makarov. "Why didn't you play this well for the Flames in the playoffs?" he asked. "We'd still be playing."

Makarov was stunned.

"Aw, I didn't mean anything by it," says Fleury now. "He's a good guy. He's still my roommate."

Fleury is learning such diplomacy at the same time that he's learning the defensive aspects of the game. As a kid who always had the puck in junior hockey, he still has trouble playing without it. When big

RICHARD MACKSON

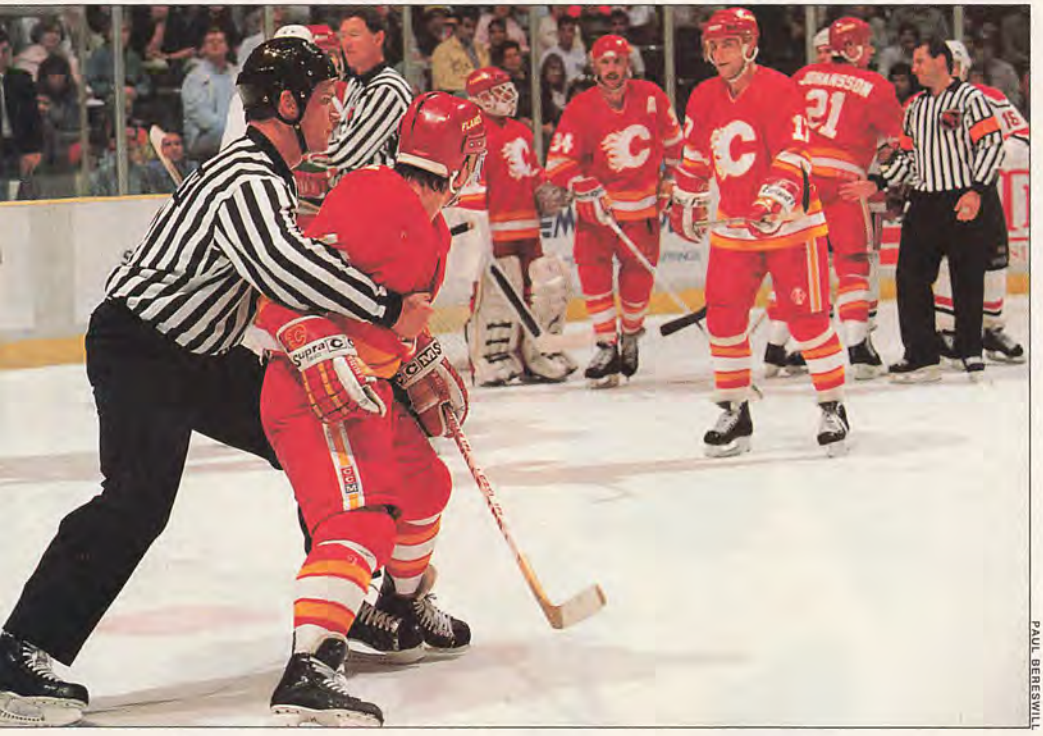
Fleury is a head shorter than teammate Al MacInnis (left), which makes him all the more inviting as a target for NHL heavyweights.

NOT SWEET

wingers come out of the corners and drive toward the net, Fleury obviously is not an ideal obstacle. Sometimes, however, the best defense is a good offense, and taking the puck from Fleury is a huge task.

Taking him seriously, at least at first glance, is just as difficult. "When I first saw Theo, I thought of him as a small, skilled forward," says Risebrough. "Now I just see a skilled forward."

"At that size, with those thick glasses," says Flame defenseman Gary Suter, "I thought he should be at the library studying for a test." Fact is, Fleury spent his first professional training camp, in 1987, outperforming established players on the Flames. He forced Calgary to consider him to be a legitimate prospect, even though the Flames had drafted him in the eighth round because they thought of him only as a gate attraction for their new farm team in Salt Lake City. The scouts refused to take him seriously despite his scoring 397 points in his final three seasons in Moose Jaw. It takes exceptional skills, plus extraordinary faith from the organization drafting him, for a small player to be chosen high in the draft.



PAUL BERESWILL

Officials struggle to keep the wraps on Fleury, who had 157 penalty minutes in '89–90.

Gifted little players have always found a place in the league. According to the NHL, the most diminutive player to have lasted any appreciable length of time was the 5′ 1″, 145-pound Harry Darragh, who played 314 games for four teams from 1925 to '33. Aurel Joliat (5′ 6″, 136) and Henri Richard (5′ 7″, 160) of the Montreal Canadiens were good enough to become members of the Hockey Hall of Fame. Bobby Lalonde (5′ 5″, 155), who played for four teams from 1971 to '82, survived in an era when the success of the Big Bad Boston Bruins and the Philadelphia Flyers' Broad Street Bullies compelled clubs to bulk up in self-defense.

Since the 1971–72 season, the average size of an NHL player has increased from 5′ 11″, 184 pounds to 6 feet, 194. But the size of the standard North American hockey rink, 200 by 85 feet, has remained the same since the game was brought indoors at the turn of the century. Most of the big guys can now do a lot more than just punch, so the issue here isn't so much goonery as it is the fact that players take up more space and run into each other more frequently. And with less open ice, play along the boards and in front of the net becomes more critical. So does the injury factor. The consequences of a 170-pound body colliding with one weighing 200 are predictable. Moreover, the playoff schedule—the two teams that make the Stanley Cup finals will have played a game every other night for seven weeks—rewards the most durable club, not always the most talented one.

Thus, smart teams select big guys. Flame general manager Cliff Fletcher has issued guidelines to his scouts saying that they should consider defensemen less than six feet tall only if they are exceptionally talented. However, with the NHL hoping to add as many as seven new teams before the end of this decade, players previously stereotyped as too small will gain some of the additional jobs. Even more may find work if the NHL finally eliminates fighting—and renders superfluous the goons who now occupy the last couple of spots on most teams' rosters. Meanwhile, Fleury's performance is writing a new bill of rights for the little man.

Size isn't the only obstacle Fleury has had to overcome. When he was 14 years old, an opponent's skate blade severed an artery and the ulnar nerve in his right arm, leaving Fleury with numbness in his fingers. Naturally, the season he spent out of hockey waiting for the nerve to regenerate only made Fleury love the game more. He cannot remember a time he didn't want to play professionally. Nor a time when he wasn't told he was too small to realize his dream.

Fleury's father, Wally, is 5′ 8″, and his mother, Donna, is 5′ 1″. So genetics weren't on Theoren's side. "Even the girls were taller than me," Theoren says. "I was always the smallest guy." He was also the fastest. Until Fleury left his hometown of Russell, Manitoba (pop. 1,800), to play junior hockey, his skating and passing skills were all he needed to excel. But at Moose Jaw, where he went to play at age 16, Fleury, then already 5′ 6″ but a waiflike 140, suddenly found himself regularly giving up 30 pounds to opponents. He decided that a stick held above waist level was valuable as a deterrent. "I wondered what I was getting myself into," says Fleury. "So I started to play that aggressive style."

That style won him space to operate, plus a reputation as an irritant—even before he jumped onto the back of a Soviet player who was fighting with one of Fleury's Canadian teammates during the 1987 world junior championships in Piestany, Czechoslovakia. The result was a bench-clearing brawl that didn't end until tournament officials turned out the arena lights. Both teams were disqualified, but it did not occur to Fleury to be embarrassed. His only reaction was that he was delighted to have played well against

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the best junior-age talent in the world.

The next year, Fleury helped Canada win the junior gold medal. He then returned to Moose Jaw to finish the Warriors' season before joining Salt Lake City—in time to score 11 goals in eight playoff games. After playing 40 games for Salt Lake at the start of the next season, he was called up to Calgary.

Fleury was an instant hit with Flame fans and an instant mishit with his teammates. "Most guys who get to this level have been told many times on the way up that they wouldn't make it," says Calgary center Joe Nieuwendyk, "and I'm sure it was multiplied 10 times in his case. So Theo expressed himself to everybody, the media included, that he was confident."

The Flames didn't begrudge him the media attention, but they were offended by some of his statements. "It was just a few things that made it sound like he was trying harder than some of his teammates," says goalie Rick Wamsley.

Tensions have eased, although there still isn't a great deal of warmth between Fleury and many of his teammates. Shannon Griffin, who is Fleury's 21-year-old fiancée and the mother of his three-year-old son, Joshua, says she felt they were outsiders at the celebration following Calgary's winning of the 1989 Stanley Cup. "I like everybody to like me," she says, "but I don't think it bothers Theo that he's not the most popular guy on the team."

Perhaps that's because Fleury may have considered being well-liked a lost cause long before he joined the Flames. When Theoren was growing up, his father, who drove heavy equipment for the town of Russell, had a drinking problem and often embarrassed him in front of his teammates. "He would talk loud at games, say things like 'Theoren's going great tonight, but what about you guys?' " says Donna. Wally joined Alcoholics Anonymous in 1985. "I couldn't look at myself in the mirror anymore," he says. Since he went on the wagon, his relationship with Theoren and his other sons, Travis (17) and Ted (20), who is playing tier II junior hockey in Neepawa (Man.), has improved. "Now we're best buddies," says Theoren.

Griffin, a Moose Jaw native who met Fleury at a Meet the Moose Jaw Warriors barbecue, says his home environment was more of a disadvantage than he admits. "He would never complain, never embarrass his father or mother, who are very good-hearted people," she says. "In fact when Theoren saw where [former teammate] Joey Mullen grew up, in Hell's Kitchen in New York, he said he couldn't believe Joey and his brothers got out of there alive.

"Everything's relative, I guess, but it wasn't easy for Theoren. I don't think he ever had a pair of skates that wasn't paid for by somebody else in the town. Somebody usually made sure his hotel room was paid for when they'd go away for youth hockey tournaments.

"But he was a good player that they wanted to take care of. And I don't think everybody in Russell has been as nice to his father. He might need an artificial knee [due to arthritic deterioration from a baseball injury] and can't work anymore, and the town isn't giving him very much. Theoren's mom and dad still live in low-cost rental housing. Our next project is to get them a house."

Griffin is taking courses at the University of Calgary and hopes to become a teacher. She and Fleury will be married but they have yet to begin the extensive counseling the Catholic Church requires of a couple who have had a child out of wedlock. For the record, Griffin is five feet and isn't counting on Joshua to receive a basketball scholarship. She says Fleury's on-ice personality bears no resemblance to the one he displays at home. And there are even indications that he is beginning to mellow during games, if only slightly. "I think he's toning it down," says Risebrough. "He's learning to apply [his feistiness] for the team's sake."

Fleury's sense of team loyalty has always been strong. At the world championships this last spring, most of the Canadian athletes grumbled about having to play a game against Sweden, which followed two consecutive Canadian losses. A win against the Swedes would have given the Canadians third place in the tournament. Fleury had no complaints. "What do you mean it's a nothing game?" he said to reporters. "We're playing for the *bronze medal*."

The look of earnestness on his face made it clear that Fleury has never played a meaningless game. "A big guy has to prove he can't play," he says. "A little guy has to keep proving that he can." So he skates resolutely on.

"It's funny, but I'm a pessimist by nature," says Griffin. "If Theoren says he's going to be home at noon and he isn't there at 12:20, I think, Accident. But nothing about him being on the ice bothers me. I think he's indestructible. If some big guy comes after him and a fight starts, I just know that in a few seconds he'll come crawling out between somebody's legs." ■

PATRICK HARBRON/OUTLINE

Fleury is a different creature at home—no Halloween monster to Griffin or Joshua.

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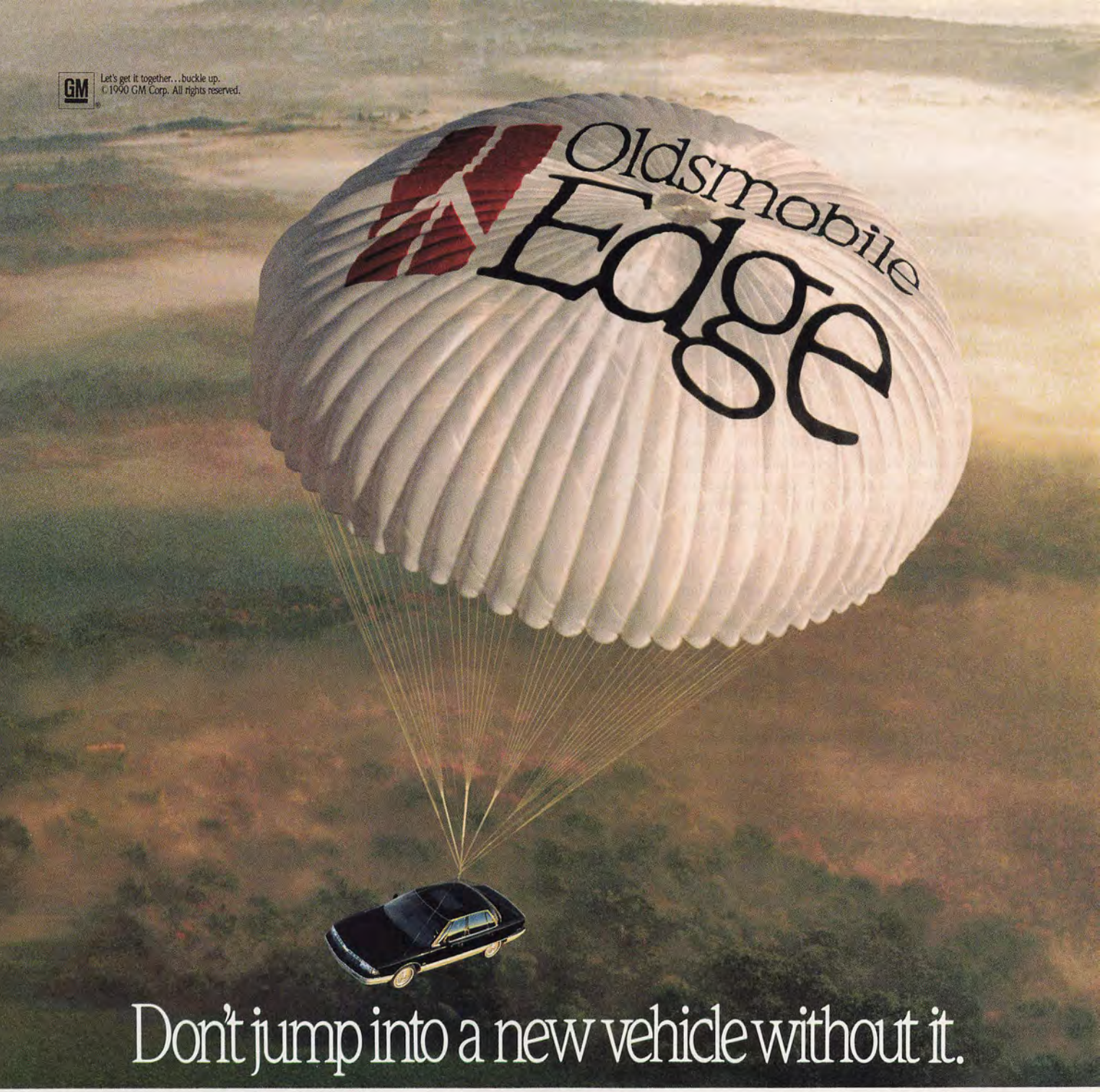

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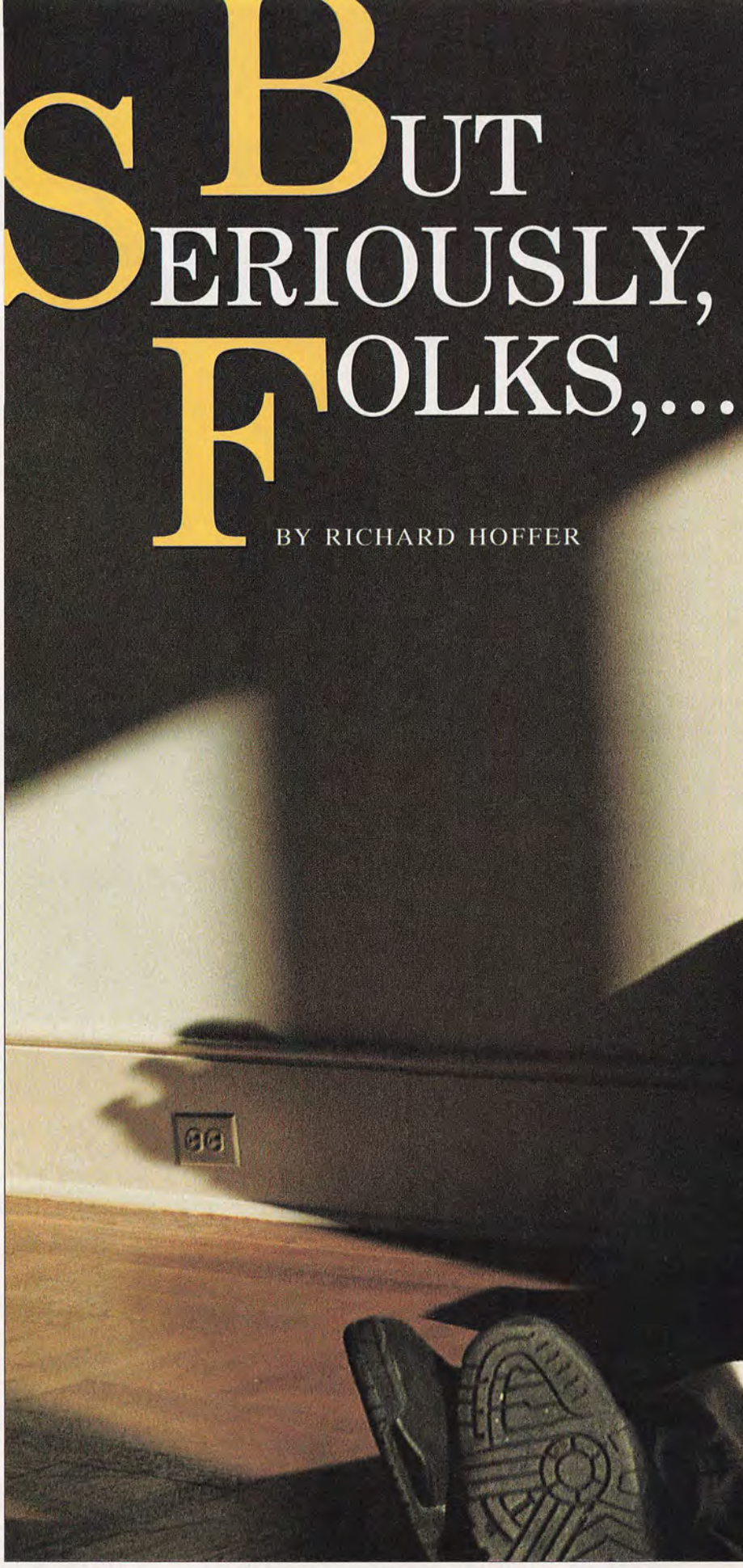
BUT SERIOUSLY, FOLKS,...

BY RICHARD HOFFER

IT WASN'T THE FIRST TIME RIDDICK BOWE had paid more attention to someone in the crowd than to the business at hand in the ring, but at least this once he waited until the fight was over. There was Bowe, his hand being raised in triumph by the referee, spotting Bill Cosby and jiggling his head like a dashboard dog, a trademark Cos gesture. Here Bowe had gotten the biggest win of his young life, a two-round knockout of Bert Cooper, and this mugging was all he could think to do. "Good old Bert," as Bowe had called him, had yet to be gathered from the canvas, and Bowe was on to the entertainment portion of the program. Ladies and gentlemen: the Clown Bomber.

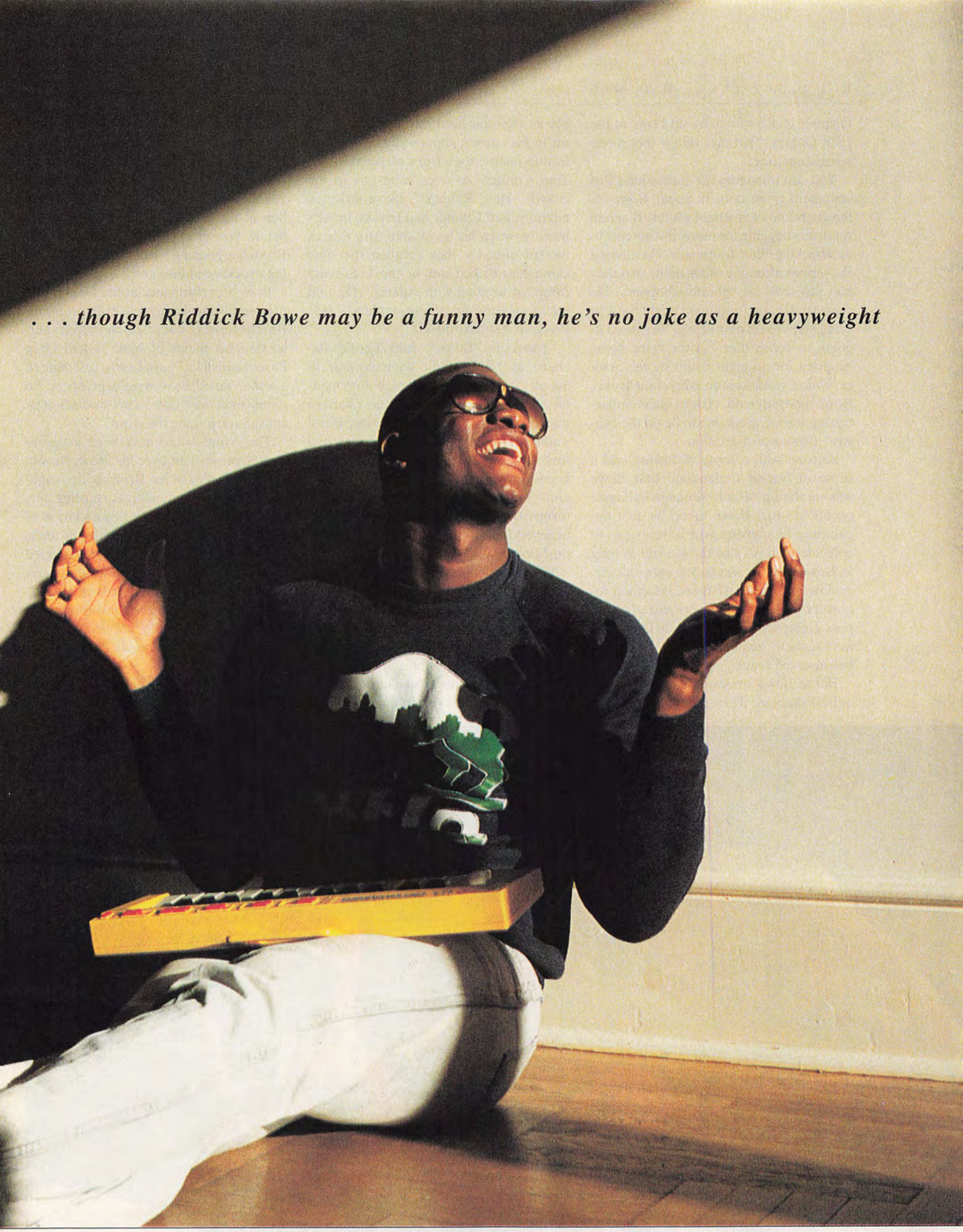
Is this the future of the heavyweight division, a boxer whose idea of a fight plan is to shtick and move? Could be. Bowe is quickly emerging as the class of an exciting second echelon of heavies—several notches below Evander Holyfield, Mike Tyson and Razor Ruddock—which also includes Ray Mercer, Tommy Morrison and Bruce Seldon, undefeated prospects waiting for the smoke to clear at the top. Bowe, a remarkable physical phenomenon—he is 6′ 5″, weighs 230 pounds and has the limber moves of a middleweight—may be the most gifted of the bunch, and he's now being hailed as much for his Muhammad Ali imitation in the ring as for his Eddie Murphy imitation outside it.

His success has served only to confuse Bowe, a self-styled comic genius with a repertoire of celebrity impressions, who suddenly finds himself being taken seriously as a fighter, the dashboard-dog bit notwithstanding. At 23, Bowe is 20–0, with 18 KOs. His jab has been compared to the one Larry Holmes used in his 24 title fights, and his footwork has invoked memories of Ali. What's more, his trainer, Eddie Futch, has armed Bowe with a right hand, a destructive tool that has gotten him out of the ring in an average of less than three rounds in his pro career. Futch has more teaching to do, but even Bowe's critics, who once dismissed him as a buffoon, concede that he may finally be capable of exercising his talent in the ring instead of at the Improv. "He's really grown up," says Ken Adams, the U.S.



Ever the cutup outside the ring, Bowe has perfected a wicked Stevie Wonder impression.

. . . though Riddick Bowe may be a funny man, he's no joke as a heavyweight



PHOTOGRAPHS BY RONALD C. MODRA

Olympic coach who baby-sat Bowe at the 1988 Games. "He says things that make sense sometimes."

You can't imagine the turnaround this statement represents. In Seoul, Bowe offered a brand of postfight whimsy that had reporters begging for more and his coaches smacking their foreheads. He advised the scribes after one of his bouts that they had just seen his "ghetto whopper." He suggested that an opponent might think to bring his pension plan along, "because I'm going to retire him." After twice being dropped for an eight count by the Soviet Union's Aleksandr Miroshnichenko, Bowe modestly said, "It was quite embarrassing for the great one to be on the canvas." Bowe won a decision.

Anyone with a sense of history and a sense of humor understood that Bowe was emulating Ali, a big enough influence on his life that Bowe timed his first appearance in a boxing gym 10 years ago to coincide with Ali's birthday. And as long as Bowe won, he was surely entertaining. A slow day in Seoul? Bowe informed reporters that the U.S. boxers had a betting pool going on the quickest knockout. "It ain't kosher!" yelped Adams, in his role of beleaguered coach.

But as Bowe attracted fans, he also acquired skeptics. They tended to remember an Olympic bout during which Bowe sat in his corner, supposedly listening to frantic instructions from assistant coach Tom Coulter. A voice rang out in the crowd: "Hey, Riddick!" Bowe swiveled mightily, and Coulter had to take Bowe's head between his hands and turn it back toward him. Or they recalled the time Bowe was kicked out of the U.S. team camp for arguing with Adams. "He told me to take the first thing smoking," says Bowe, as if still surprised.

"Spaceship Bowe," said Ferdie Pacheco as NBC's fight commentator in Seoul. "An enormous talent, but no mental stability whatsoever." It wasn't hard to line up with the Fight Doctor after Bowe walked through his gold medal match, a loss to Canada's Lennox Lewis. Who knew Bowe's family was dying all about him? Who cared to guess at this clown's torment? Nobody, really. So Bowe, who believed that all the world is a stage, got the hook.

For many boxers the Olympics represent a terrific send-off. Bowe remembered the attention that Mark Breland, who trained in the same Brooklyn gym at which Bowe worked out, got after winning the gold at 147 pounds in the 1984 Games. Before the 1988 Games, Bowe had said, "Perhaps they'll give me a parade, like the Mets. I'll get a ride home from the airport on top of a fire truck."

But he had miscalculated. His wife, Judy, and two children, Riddick Jr. and Ridicia, were the only ones looking for him at the gate when he got back from Seoul. It was a lonely ride back to the Brooklyn housing project and the growing wreckage of his family.

Bowe's performance at the Games had been so disappointing that even promoter Butch Lewis, once an avid pursuer, washed his hands of him. "I had Greg Page flashbacks," says Lewis, referring to another failed heavyweight prospect. So diminished were Bowe's prospects that he considered joining the Army.

The Army would have been a significant improvement over his life in Brooklyn. The forces of his Brownsville neighborhood were undeniably corrupting. He, almost alone in Dorothy Bowe's brood of 13, had escaped drugs. An older brother, Henry, had lain dying as Bowe struggled in Seoul. Of what? "Good question," says Bowe mysteriously. "He was just sick." Only months before the Olympics, a sister, Brenda, had been stabbed to death while resisting a crack addict's attempt to

After KO'ing Cooper (right), Bowe entertained fans with a Cos-as-dashboard-dog routine.

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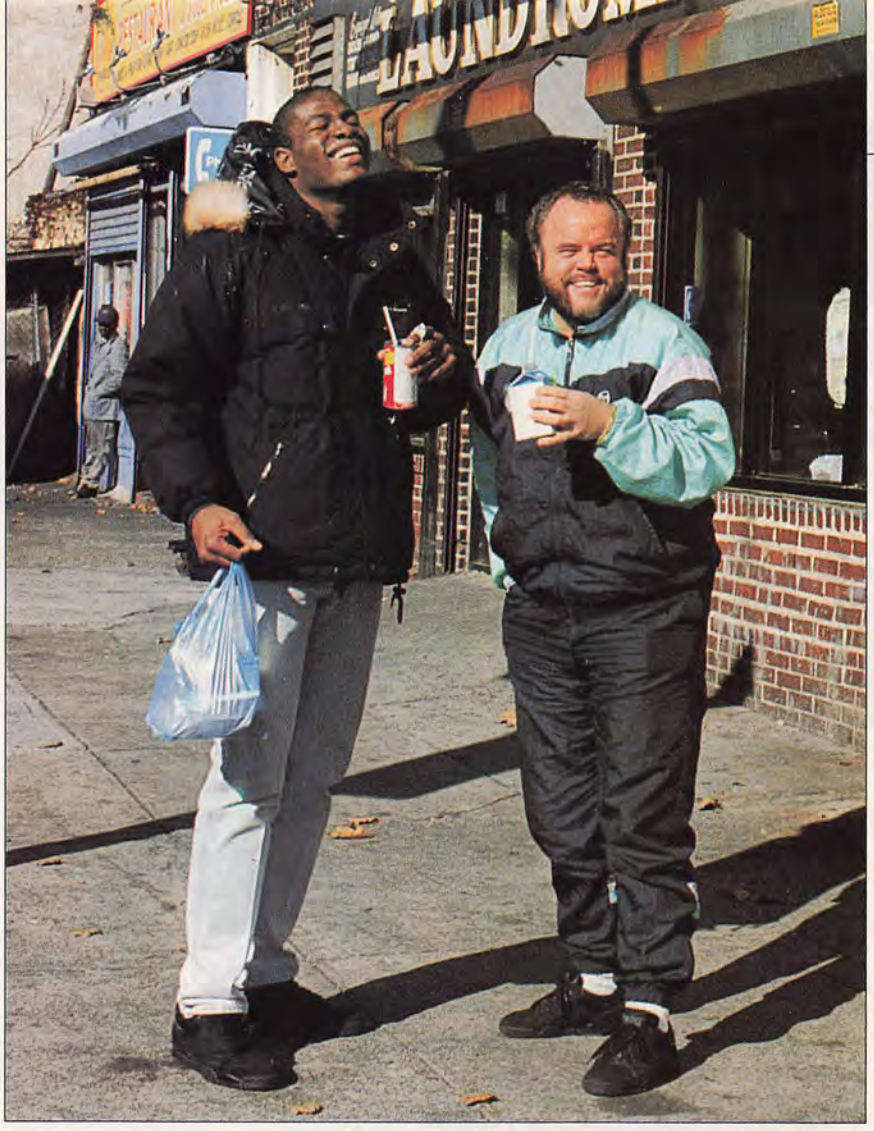

Once Newman got a look at Bowe's Brooklyn neighborhood, he knew the kid was for real.

steal her welfare money. Another brother is, says Bowe, "in and out of jail." Another sister "just can't leave that crack alone."

Most people cannot imagine what that silver medal condemned him to, not even Rock Newman, one of Lewis's assistants. He maintained an interest in Bowe, though Lewis warned him, "That boy will break your heart." Newman believed that a hand injury sustained before the Olympics—Bowe had had surgery on it the preceding April—was the explanation for his defeat at the Games. Newman also knew that Bowe had been shattered by his sister's death and that, for all his wisecracking, all he wanted to do while in Seoul was return home and repair his family. "We were just so tight, Brenda and me," he told Newman. So Newman visited Bowe, on a kind of character-finding tour.

Newman had managed Dwight Muhammad Qawi, a hardened product of the ghettos of Camden, N.J., and was familiar with America's version of ground zero. However, while walking up to the housing project where Bowe, Judy and their children still lived with his mother, Dorothy, even Newman became unnerved. "He meets me outside the building like I'm some kind of tenderfoot," says Newman. " 'Believe me,' I tell him, 'I've seen my share of city life.' There's this long line of people coming out of the building. I'm thinking it's a soup kitchen. 'What's this?' I ask. He says they're standing in line to buy crack. They were 50 to 60 deep. And it's cold. I say, 'Can't be.' So he shrugs and takes me upstairs. He lives on the sixth floor, and the elevator, of course, is broken. He points out people sitting on the landings with automatic weapons. He mentions, like an aside, that people around here really don't respond too well when things happen. I say, 'What do you mean?' He says, 'A guy got shot out here the other day, like at four in the afternoon, and they never moved his body out of the hall until the next morning.'

"So we go into the apartment where he lives. Small living room, got all his trophies, the tapes from his amateur career. I look into this tiny bedroom, where he, his wife and two kids are living, and it struck me there. If he could have survived here, there must be something special about him."

What in the world was Bowe laughing about all those years? His family was breaking down. The world he knew was in magnificent disrepair. Yet he reconstructed his childhood to resemble something torn from a *Saturday Evening Post* cover. "Oh, we had a lot of fun," he says. "If I could just go back to being between 10 and 16, I'd never grow up."

Still, he did not completely deny the reality of his environment. If conversation flags, he will perk things up with some horrible and violent reminiscence. "I was once standing this close to a guy, and he got his head blown right off," he will say casually. But everything is presented as mostly normal and innocent. Even the lurking menace of Tyson, ahead of Bowe at Public School 396 and a bully, is recalled gently. Says Bowe, "About all I remember is that he was big for his age, and he always had a bag of cookies with him." He pauses. "Good old Mike."

There is a softness to Bowe that belies his background and his profession. He is a kid who walked his mother to her job at a plastic-housewares factory, 1½ miles every night. Bowe would pour out his dreams to her, how he wanted to be somebody, be different. He would like to be champion, he told her. He would enable her to retire. He would buy them a house. Dorothy, who is given to wearing shirts with BIG DOT on the back, didn't much go for this mush. Just don't go to jail, she told him, because that's one place she would never visit.

Newman, hearing all this, couldn't wait to get into his own pockets and sign this kid. He was supposed to be a quitter? Newman dished out $50,000 and began the reclamation program. He knew that Bowe needed something more than money, though. He needed a trainer who could push the right buttons. There was only one, really—Futch, then 78, trainer of 15 world champions. Of course, Futch wasn't about to take on Bowe. "I'd heard the stories," Futch says. "And I saw the Olympic final, which was kind of puzzling." Maybe you can take chances on mystery fighters when you're young, but darned if Futch was going to spend his 80's with a nut case.

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Newman was determined. He picked up the phone a dozen times to call Futch, then put it back down to jot down even more persuasive arguments. "By the time I called him, I had three pages of notes," says Newman. "I was more nervous than when I asked my wife to marry me."

Several months after the Olympics, Futch finally agreed to work with Bowe. Bowe didn't know how fragile the arrangement was. Once, while training Bowe near Reno, Futch said that he was leaving on other business but that Bowe should get his running in anyway. Do it on his own. It was −6°, there were two feet of snow on the ground, and up over a hill came Bowe, plodding along. Good thing. Futch, who had been hiding on the roadside, was at last satisfied. "Good old Papa Smurf," says Bowe.

Meanwhile, at Newman's urging, Bowe moved his family into a modest house in comfortable Fort Washington, Md., outside of Washington, D.C. Oh, there was one thing, Bowe told Newman. The yard had to have a fence so that his children (there is a third now, Brenda Joyce) wouldn't get lost in the bewildering vastness of suburbia. They must be safe. A house with a fence having been chosen, Bowe went back to Brownsville, walked the 1½ miles to the housewares factory to take his mother her lunch, and told her supervisor he was giving two weeks' notice for Dorothy. She was going to move in with him. It was his dream—a desperate one—to make his family whole. Today, on top of his TV, as a kind of shrine, are pictures of Brenda and Henry.

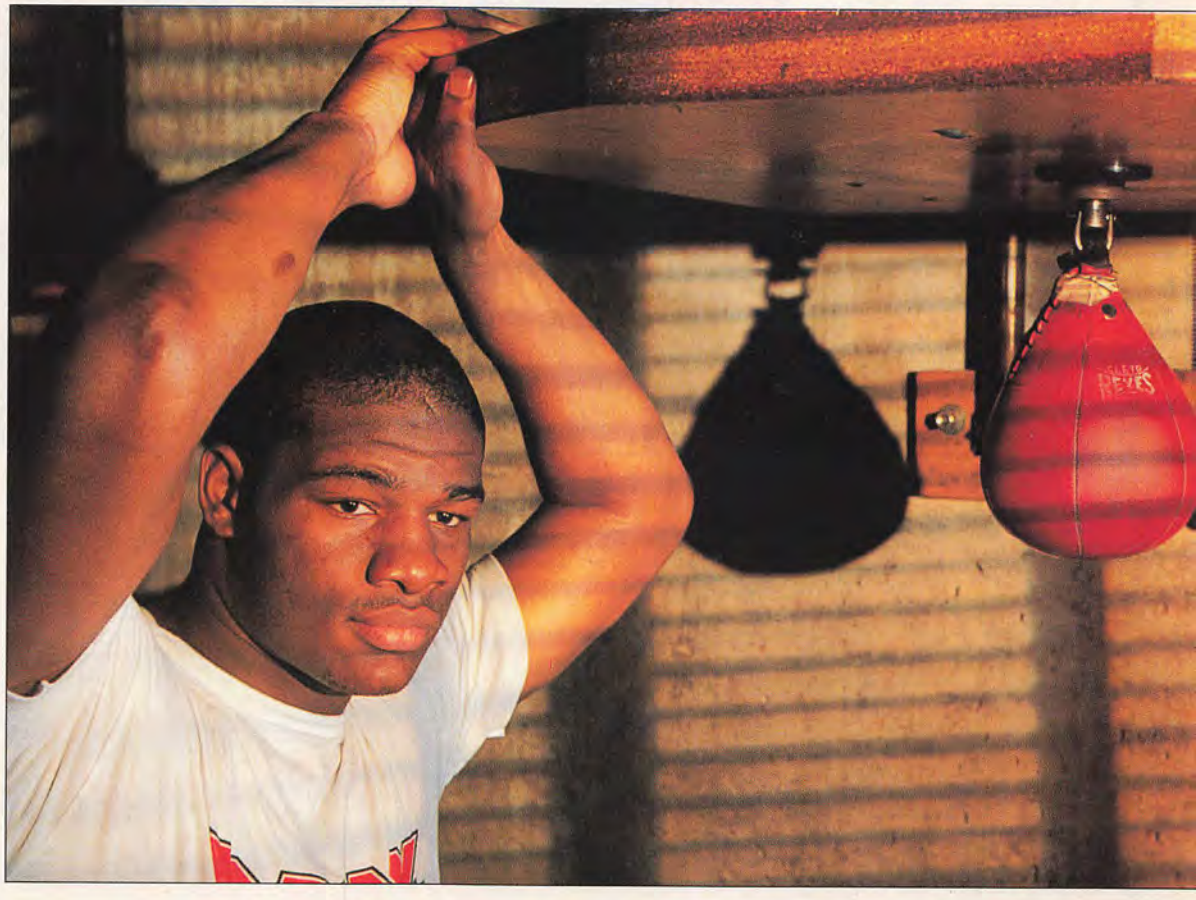
Newman has run a calculated campaign on behalf of Bowe. Seeing how Sugar Ray Leonard has benefited from not being tied to one promoter, Newman has kept Bowe from Don King and the rest. Nobody holds options on him. That has proved costly. Until Newman put together a limited partnership of investors, he had to shell out $250,000 of his own money to keep Bowe going. Why so much? You would hate to call it a conspiracy, but Newman discovered that to get Bowe on certain cards, he had to pay not just his own boxer's purse but the opponent's and some promotional overhead as well. Bowe wasn't even fighting for free; he was paying for the opportunity.

Newman brought Bowe along slowly, matching him with confidence-builders before allowing him to face Pinklon Thomas and Cooper. Newman hopes the payoff is at hand, perhaps in 18 months. Even before that, he thinks, Bowe's marquee value could force a $25 million nontitle fight, something like the unsanctioned Michael Spinks–Gerry Cooney bout of 3½ years ago. Bowe's widely watched two-round knockout of Cooper, on the Holyfield–Buster Douglas card, was more of a promotional tool than a victory. The crispness of the knockout—"Look, here's Bert trying to double-jab, and here's my right [Bowe is chuckling as he watches a tape of his fight with Cooper]. Good old Bert"—is a credential the WBC can't provide.

In the meantime Bowe's life as a contender is pleasant enough. Five months ago Newman allowed Bowe to use part of the $60,000 purse he received for beating Art Tucker to splurge on a Jeep Cherokee, which has been customized into a convertible. Bowe tools around Maryland in it, calling up friends on his car phone as he passes by their houses—"Can you see the Sunoco station from your window? O.K., I'm in the right lane. . . ."—and then going home to wash it or to play with his kids or to talk to his mother, safely ensconced in a basement bedroom.

However, he still has much to do. He wants to buy a BMW 735i and his own apartment complex back in Brownsville. "How many apartments you think are in a complex?" he says. "Well, let's figure it out. Six floors to a building, 12 apartments to a floor and four buildings—288 apartments. I remember back in '87, walking through a complex just like that, thinking, If they ever sold that complex, I'd like to buy it for my family. Put all my brothers and sisters, relatives and friends in it, everybody close to me, put 'em right there. Like a big happy family."

Good old Bowe. ■



Bowe, who is 20–0, has his sights on a big-money bout.

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INSIDE COLLEGE BASKETBALL

BY PHIL TAYLOR

A LOT OF HEART

First, Joe Rhett just wanted to live. Then he wanted to play basketball again. Then he wanted to play well. Each wish has come true as Rhett's comeback story has become more and more amazing.

Rhett, a 6′ 8″ junior forward at South Carolina, had a pacemaker installed in his chest last Feb. 22 to stimulate his irregular heartbeat, which would stop at times for up to seven seconds. Many people, including Rhett, at first thought his basketball career might be over because of the heart condition, but he has returned to the Gamecocks this season, and he's playing better than ever.

He made the all-tournament team two weeks ago at the Great Alaska Shootout, where he was the top rebounder, then topped himself last weekend as South Carolina beat North Carolina 76–74 and Houston 74–70 to win the Tournament of Champions, in Charlotte. Rhett had 15 points and six rebounds against the Heels in the first meeting between the teams in 18 years. For Gamecock fans, beating North Carolina was cause enough for rejoicing. But Rhett followed that with 21 points and 12 boards against Houston and was named the tournament MVP. Last weekend, after five games, he had averaged 14.2 points and 9.4 boards, a significant improvement on the 11.0 points and 7.9 rebounds he averaged in 22 games last season before his heart condition forced him to the bench.

"It's pretty hard to believe," he said. "I was hoping that eventually I'd get back to where I used to be, but I didn't know how long it would take. I'm just grateful."

Rhett first became aware of his problem when he nearly blacked out in a Louisville hotel room during a road trip. He became nauseated and his body grew numb. "I thought I was having a heart attack," he said. "I couldn't move anything, and that really scared me. Then my heart started racing, and I couldn't move. I was really sweating."

Less than two weeks after the pacemaker was installed, Loyola Marymount's Hank Gathers, who suffered from cardiomyopathy, collapsed while playing and died. Rhett was moved to tears. "It made me see how easily it could happen, how one minute you could be playing and the next. . . . I used to lie awake at night wondering if I could play again, if I should play again."

Rhett has come back better than ever after getting a pacemaker.

JIM GUND

Doctors eventually told Rhett that playing wouldn't put him at any increased risk. He takes no medication and says he can't feel the half-dollar-sized pacemaker, which is located near his collarbone and keeps his heart rate from falling below 40 beats a minute. But he doesn't deny thinking about the pacemaker.

"I never think about it when I'm playing, but sometimes when I'm sitting alone in my room, I wonder what will happen if I get an elbow there or something," he said. "But three doctors have told me I'm fine, and I feel fine."

Even Rhett has trouble explaining why he's playing better than he did before the pacemaker was implanted. "Maybe it's because I know that people are watching me, not wanting something to happen to me but curious to see if it will," he says. "I guess I'm just trying extra hard to prove to them that I'm fine."

WHAT'S IN THE CARDS?

Louisville's 72–52 loss to Indiana last Saturday in the Big Four Classic showed that the Cardinals can't compete with the elite, at least not yet. But the program may have bigger problems brewing away from the court.

A clash between coach Denny Crum and university president Donald C. Swain over academic standards, among other issues, has Crum openly talking about life after Louisville. Crum, in his 20th season with the Cardinals, has stopped speaking to university administrators about an extension of his 10-year contract, which expires in July 1993.

"I might be receptive to other offers, depending on what they are," said Crum, who will receive a $1 million bonus when his current contract expires. "The whole atmosphere around here has changed. It's not like it was. Everything seems to be going in a direction that will make it very difficult for us to have success and compete at the level we've been competing."

The crux of the matter is increased scrutiny of the academic performance of Louisville players. Only six of the 37 scholarship players who completed their eligibility at the school from 1981 to '90 earned degrees within five years of enrolling. On top of that, four of this year's recruits are academically ineligible.

The administration reacted by passing a rule in October that requires juniors and seniors to maintain a 2.0 grade point average in order to play. Crum believes

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that the rule puts his team at a competitive disadvantage.

The discord between Crum and Swain escalated when Crum took part in a demonstration to protest the school's decision to use most of the proceeds from the football team's Jan. 1 Fiesta Bowl appearance for a minority scholarship program. Crum thinks that more of the money should be used for scholarships and equipment in Louisville's nonrevenue sports.

Crum certainly is not opposed to the idea of higher academic standards or more minority scholarships, and it may be that what he really wants is a bigger voice in the decision-making process. Still, it appears that in this situation Crum is the one who should do most of the bending.

RECRUITING SEASON OPENS

You probably didn't realize it, but the most popular place for college coaches to be last weekend was Garden City, Kans. Nolan Richardson of Arkansas and Roy Williams of Kansas were there, as were recruiters for men's and women's teams at more than 100 other schools, including Oklahoma, Florida, DePaul, Missouri, Texas, Washington and Oregon.

They were in Garden City for the fourth annual Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference Shootout, which featured several players you're sure to see playing major roles at top Division I schools in a year or two. And surely it had to be the only event in the country that offered, as the Shootout's motto says, "32 games in three days under one roof."

That's 16 men's games and 16 women's games, held in adjacent gyms, 12 of them last Saturday, and 10 more on each of the next two days. That pretty much ensured the true basketball junkie at least 10 hours of continuous basketball every day, after which we would suggest that he or she seek professional counseling.

That doesn't mean the Shootout wasn't worthwhile. "Kansas, California and Texas have the top juco basketball systems in the country," said New Mexico assistant Paul Graham. "You can come to this tournament and see just about all the [Kansas] juco talent you need to see all in one shot. It's a recruiter's dream."

That's exactly what it's intended to be. It's no coincidence that the first day of the Shootout was Dec. 1, which was also the first day of the NCAA's 10-day evaluation period, when coaches can watch players but not talk to them.

The coaches at Garden City estimated that there were roughly 15 players capable of playing for teams in major conferences and that 20 to 30 merited scholarships from lower-profile Division I teams. Opinions differed as to who the top player of the tournament was—Butler County guard Gaylon Nickerson, Allen County swingman Trasel Rone, Independence guard Eric Coates and Garden City center Frazier Johnson all had their admirers—but the player who attracted the most attention was 6′ 6″ freshman forward Darrin Hancock, who originally signed with UNLV but ended up at Garden City Community College because of academic problems.

"Terrific player, sleek, quick," said one recruiter. "He won the dunk contests at the McDonald's and Dapper Dan [high school all-star] games, which tells you how exciting a player he is."

The crowds for the Shootout expanded and contracted according to the attractiveness of the matchups, but about 2,500 fans filled the gym to watch Hancock and Garden City take on Coates and his Independence teammates on the first day. Hancock was acrobatic, putting together 14 points, eight rebounds and nine assists, but the night belonged to Coates, who had 26 points and nine rebounds to lead Independence to a 74–71 win.

Afterward, the recruiters stood in the lobby, most of them wearing something that displayed their school's emblem, as the players walked by. The emblems were a way of ensuring that the players knew of the school's interest in them. "Great place to see talent," Graham said. "Garden City is a tough place to get to—you better like propeller planes if you want to come—but for this, it's worth it."

PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST

As an aspiring artist, Missy Sharer of Grinnell (Iowa) College deals mainly in landscapes and still lifes, but the 5′ 8″ senior guard has also exhibited a pretty fine stroke on the basketball court. Last season, she led Division III women in three-point field goal percentage (52.5%) and finished 18th in scoring (20.5 points per game). This year she's off to a great start, averaging 32.1 points after five games.

Sharer, who works mostly with watercolors, describes her style as "realistic, with a tendency toward impressionism. My paintings aren't photographic representations. I don't draw things exactly as I see them. But if I draw an apple, you can tell it's an apple."

She originally attended Central Arizona, a Division I school, on a basketball scholarship, but left after only one semester. "I didn't have time for art or other classes or anything else besides basketball," says Sharer. "We'd sometimes practice three times a day. It got to the point where I almost hated basketball."

So she transferred to Marshalltown (Iowa) Community College in her hometown and was given an honorable mention juco All-America as a sophomore. The next season she enrolled at Grinnell, where she has flourished as a player and an artist. She recently sold five of her paintings in an

PHIL HUBER

Far from the lights of Vegas, Hancock was a star attraction at the Kansas juco Shootout.

exhibition at the campus art gallery.

"The most expensive one I sold was $75," she says. "My friends keep telling me I'm crazy, that I have to raise the prices."

But Sharer isn't completely unconcerned with the bottom line. The starving artist's life doesn't appeal to her, so she's considering a career in commercial art and graphic design—unless she can find a way to combine fine art and basketball. "Europe wouldn't be a bad idea," she said. "Maybe I can find a team to play for in Paris."

The Left Bank and bank shots. Sounds perfect.

DAVID WALBERG

Sharer is a strong threat from three-point range, but she is also good in the paint.

DOWN-UNDER THUNDER

Peter Martin of MidAmerica Nazarene, an NAIA school in Olathe, Kans., describes himself in this way: "I'm a white guy, seven feet tall, slow, and I can't jump. I'm not very pretty on the court."

True, but his statistics are things of beauty. Martin, a junior center from New Zealand, is averaging 38.7 points per game after nine games, including a 79-point effort on Nov. 23 against Northwest Nazarene College. "Actually, it was 81," says Coach Rocky Lamar. "I went back and watched the tape and the official scorer gave two points to the wrong kid." The numbers would have been even more impressive if Lamar hadn't benched Martin before halftime of another game because Martin got two technicals for mouthing off to an official.

Martin doesn't just stand near the basket shooting layups and dunks. "He's a terrific shooter out to 15 feet, with a variety of shots, including a little sky hook," says Lamar. That makes Martin's 75% field goal shooting even more impressive. In his 79-point game, Martin made 33 of 41 shots.

MidAmerica Nazarene is obviously grateful that this large bundle fell more or less into its lap. Martin played at Utah Valley Community College in Orem, Utah, from 1987 to '89, then signed to play for Fresno State because he had been a high school exchange student in Fresno. But after spending a summer on the California campus, he decided he didn't like the school enough to stay. He went home to New Zealand for a year because Fresno State wouldn't let him out of his letter of intent.

Lamar heard about Martin from a former MidAmerica Nazarene player and phoned him in New Zealand about once a month until Martin agreed to come to Kansas for a visit. The college's rules prevented Lamar from paying Martin's way, which would have been difficult anyway, because even the long-distance calls were a strain on Nazarene's small budget. "The calls were very, very brief," Lamar says.

The coach got more than he bargained for. "I came back at about 255 pounds from my mum's home cooking—Vegemite sandwiches, meat and potatoes," says Martin. He has since lost about 20 pounds and is moving a bit quicker. Against NAIA competition, the only thing that may slow him down is his temper.

"If I can keep my mouth shut and not make a fool of myself, perhaps I'll get a chance [at the NBA]," says Martin.

TIP-INS

After Temple lost to Iowa 73–71 in the opening round of the NIT on Nov. 15, Owls coach John Chaney put his team through double-session practices for three straight days during the Thanksgiving break. On Thanksgiving Day, the Owls practiced from 9 a.m. to noon and from 6 to 9 p.m., with time off for a turkey dinner in the cafeteria. Apparently the extra work helped. Temple beat rival Villanova 70–57 last week. . . . Texas A&M's new practice of letting a walk-on start every home game and play until the opponent scores its first field goal got off to an inauspicious start. The first honored walk-on was Brian Linder, a 6′ 3″ freshman, who was whistled for a travel in the 22 seconds he played before Oklahoma scored. The Aggies lost, 81–65. . . . Rice women's coach Mike Dunavant learned recently that he had successfully recruited 6′ 5″ center Nicki Manzo of Lompoc (Calif.) High when Manzo had a pizza delivered to Dunavant with the word *yes* spelled out in pepperoni. . . . La Salle guard Doug Overton is spending the semester as a student teacher of a fourth-grade class at Simmons Elementary School outside Philadelphia. When he was out with a sprained ankle during preseason, one of his students sent him a get-well card with a drawing of a scoreboard. It read: LA SALLE 19121353201, TEMPLE 0. ■

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

MEN

Alphonso Ford, a 6′ 2″ sophomore guard for Mississippi Valley State, averaged 40.3 points and 5.7 rebounds as the Delta Devils beat Southern 93–84, North Carolina A&T 80–74 and Albany State 95–86.

WOMEN

North Carolina State's 5′ 10″ senior guard Andrea Stinson scored 28 points on 13 of 26 shooting, and had nine rebounds, two steals and two blocked shots in the Wolfpack's 90–77 win over No. 3 Tennessee.

SMALL SCHOOLS

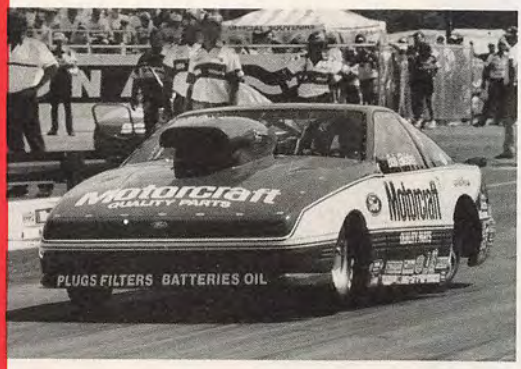
Willie Davis, a 6′ 7″ senior forward for Alderson-Broaddus, made 21 of 29 shots while scoring 59 points and grabbing 26 boards in two victories, 104–96 over Wheeling Jesuit and 99–86 over Salem.

Teaming up for a Grand Finale...again

Morgan Shepherd finished the season in style at the Atlanta Journal 500. Racing his Motorcraft Ford Thunderbird to a NASCAR Winston Cup victory, he beat Geoff Bodine by 2.5 seconds.

...and again

Manny Esquerra took first place in his last race of the season...the Baja 1000 in Ensenada, Mexico. Driving his Motorcraft Ford Ranger to victory, he beat Roger Mears and clinched the HDRA/ SCORE 1990 Championship.



...and again.

Bob Glidden ended the season at the Winston Finals by racing his Motorcraft Ford Probe to his third Pro Stock victory this year. In his 79th national career win, he beat Tony Christian by .03 of a second.

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INSIDE THE NFL

BY PETER KING

PLAYOFFS ARE TOO WILD

For all of the improvements he has initiated and the energy he has brought to the office of NFL commissioner, Paul Tagliabue made a shortsighted move last March that has turned out to be the biggest mistake of his first year on the job. Pressured by the owners to hammer out a new contract with the networks that would guarantee a huge increase in TV revenue and seeking to increase late-season fan interest, Tagliabue bargained away the premium that two teams previously had earned for winning their divisions—a bye during the wild-card weekend of the playoffs.

Tagliabue expanded the playoff field from 10 to 12, adding an extra wild-card entry from each conference. That created two more first-round games—the broadcast rights to which brought in extra money from ABC. Now, with three wild-card teams in each conference, two wild cards will play each other in the first round, and the third will meet the division winner with the worst record. The other two division winners in each conference still have first-round byes.

Admittedly this is a freak season, in that the NFC's three dominant teams—the 49ers and Giants entered their Monday night showdown with 10–1 records, and the Bears are 10–2—are all runaway division leaders. But under the new postseason format, one of these teams will lose a week off and will have to play an extra game in its bid to win the Super Bowl.

Chicago president Mike McCaskey has mixed feelings about the expanded postseason. "I don't think we'll get screwed," he says. "Clearly, I think it was in the service of a larger goal. Everyone wanted more TV dollars. I'd personally rather have a smaller number of teams make the playoffs and make winning the division really meaningful. But a lot of people felt the TV deal was very important."

"There's supposed to be an incentive to win your division, and one of the incentives was that it took only three wins to be the Super Bowl champion," says Falcon coach Jerry Glanville. "Now, if you're, say, the Bears right now, you've got to win four games. You're being punished for winning your division but not winning it by enough."

One club executive said last week that "our problem right now as a league is we're running everything as a business. We need to get back to running it as a football business. We make decisions and forget all about football when we're making them. Every decision we make is based on money, not the sport."

All the blame can't be laid on Tagliabue. He didn't negotiate the previous TV contract, which provided for all 28 clubs to receive the same amount—$17 million—per season from 1987 to '89, a period when network payouts to other sports took a sizable jump. He was subjected to the not-so-subtle urgings of the owners to make up for "lost" revenues when it was time to sit down with the networks again.

He brought four bargaining chips to the negotiations: 1) spreading the 16-game regular season over 17 weeks in 1990 and '91 and over 18 weeks in 1992 and '93 so the networks would have more weeks in which to televise games; 2) giving the networks two more commercial minutes per game—for a total of 56 minutes—starting in '92; 3) giving a second cable network, TNT, nine Sunday night games; and 4) adding two playoff teams to create two more postseason games. Owners who had expected to receive an average of $27 million a team per season were thrilled last spring when Tagliabue announced a four-year deal that would bring each of them an average of $32.1 million a year.

In a speech to the American Bar Association last June, Tagliabue talked of the pressure he felt to cut a lucrative TV deal. He said that league executives "had a way of sending me every day a new headline saying BASEBALL QUADRUPLES INCOME, or BASKETBALL QUADRUPLES INCOME, or NCAA QUADRUPLES INCOME, and then

AL TIELEMANS

Getting sacked in his end zone was one of several bone-headed plays that laid Brister low.

PRETTY GOOD COMPANY

At 10-year intervals, first-time NFL coaches Chuck Noll, Bill Walsh and Jimmy Johnson took over moribund teams in Pittsburgh, San Francisco and Dallas, respectively. After their first 28 games, they were on the same career track, a trend that Johnson obviously hopes will continue, because Noll and Walsh went on to win a combined seven Super Bowls.

The first sign of Cowboy progress—Dallas's record has improved from 1–15 in 1989 to 6–7 this season—has boosted Johnson's optimism, which was already boundless. "We could be back in the playoffs sooner than anyone imagined," he says. "The way it looks now, that could be next year."

COACH, Team	First Season	28-Game Record
CHUCK NOLL, Steelers	1969	6–22
BILL WALSH, 49ers	1979	6–22
JIMMY JOHNSON, Cowboys	1989	6–22

Oh, yeah, in 1959, another rookie coach took over a foundering team. But Vince Lombardi went 18–10 in his first 28 games with the Green Bay Packers.

they'd put these little notes on the bottom that made you sound like you might be the shortest-term commissioner in the history of the sport if you didn't also quadruple the income. When you looked at the [other sports' TV] contracts, one thing emerged very quickly. Not only were there substantially increased rights payments, but there were major increases in the inventory of programming. So we had to start facing up to the question of whether we redesign our schedule and add games, add product, or whether we stay the way we've been for 25 years. In the end, we did a little of each."

Now, however, Tagliabue maintains that the revenue generated by the extra wild-card games was less of a factor than sustaining fan interest. "In December, there's tremendous excitement week in and week out in the league," says Tagliabue. "Last year we entered the final weekend with 17 teams having a shot at the playoffs. Then we went from 17 cities hyped on NFL football to four cities the next weekend. It's kind of a letdown. Adding the two teams helps us keep the excitement up."

That's true. However, increasing the number of playoff teams from eight to 10 to 12 since 1978 is severely testing the integrity of the regular season. Who says 22 teams should be in the playoff hunt in late December? The new postseason format doesn't cripple the game. It just cheapens it—unnecessarily.

THE WEEK THAT WAS

BUBBY, CAN YOU SPARE AN ARM?

"What can you say?" said Boomer Esiason after the Bengals had won 16–12 in Pittsburgh for their sixth straight victory over the Steelers. "We've just got one of those matchup things with the Steelers. I wish we could play them every game." The last four times these teams have met, Cincinnati running back James Brooks has rushed for 113, 127, 105 and 81 yards, respectively. Cincy's crummy defense comes to life against the Steelers, whose quarterback, Bubby Brister, doesn't have the accuracy or the patience to pick apart the Bengals. Pittsburgh hasn't scored a touchdown against Cincinnati in 11 quarters.

The Steelers led the league in stupidity on Sunday. In the second quarter, Brister took a sack half a yard deep in his end zone, after having plenty of time to dump the ball. Following a timeout to set up a crucial third-down play late in the game, two Pittsburgh players went in motion—toward each other. Brister called time again, which drew a delay-of-game flag because a team can't call successive timeouts without running a play. Then, with 2:14 to play, Brister threw the potential game-winning TD pass eight feet over the head of wide-open tight end Eric Green.

OH, AND ONE MORE THING

Steeler punter Dan Stryzinski downed his own second-quarter punt, an 18-yarder, against the Bengals.

LOFTY HEIGHTS

If Bills wideout James Lofton had stopped playing after the first quarter of Buffalo's 30–23 win over the Eagles, he still would've had the best day of any NFL receiver in Week 13. Lofton caught three passes for 154 yards in the first 14 minutes. Next best effort: Stephone Paige of the Chiefs, with seven catches for 151 yards in 60 minutes. Lofton wound up with five receptions for 174 yards.

SCHOOL OF HARD KNOX

The Seahawks' last four games have been decided on the final play. They've won three of them, including a 13–10 decision on Sunday, when Norm Johnson's 42-yard field goal beat the Oilers in overtime.

JINX OF THE WEEK

The Falcons controlled the ball for 39 minutes against the Bucs, and they rushed for 222 yards, their best effort since 1986. Still, they lost their 17th straight road game, 23–17, and quarterback Chris Miller was sidelined for the year with a broken collarbone.

STATS OF THE WEEK

- Is Marion Butts of the Chargers the back of the year, or what? He has carried the ball 262 times without fumbling, and he missed being the first back to rush for 1,000 yards this season by a couple of hours. Thurman Thomas of the Bills, whose game in Buffalo started three hours before Butts's game in San Diego, was the first back to reach 1,000 yards in '90.
- Pittsburgh's Gary Anderson, who kicked four field goals against Cincinnati to raise his career total to 202, has made 49 straight inside 35 yards.
- The Patriots' defense has given up a score on the opponents' first possession in nine of 12 games this season. The New England offense has failed to get a first down on nine of 12 opening possessions. Both of those patterns were continued in a 37–7 loss to Kansas City.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Bears at Redskins. Fifty years ago, on Dec. 8, 1940, one of the NFL's most storied championship games was played in Washington, D.C. Bears 73, Redskins 0. How bad was it? Well, Washington had beaten Chicago 7–3 just three weeks earlier in the regular season. But on this day, in the first championship game carried on network radio, George Halas's Bears outrushed the Redskins 372 yards to three. Also, Chicago stopped kicking extra points in the second half because Washington, which as the home team supplied the balls, was afraid it would run out of them. (In those days, balls kicked into the stands were kept by the fans.) "Some of my players were yellow, yellow in the sense that they quit and did not give their best effort after we got behind," Redskins owner George Preston Marshall said after the game. The payoff to the league champions was $873.99 per man. The loser's share was $606.25.

Cardinals at Falcons. A sentimental matchup for two guys who traveled a long road to become NFL head coaches. In 1967, when Joe Bugel and Jerry Glanville were assistant coaches at Western Kentucky, they were so broke that they lived in a log cabin without electricity just off campus. They were two football freaks who diagrammed plays on empty pizza boxes. "All Jerry ever thought about was football," says Bugel, who in his first year with Phoenix is 4–8. "I used to kid him that if you cut his head open, little footballs would jump out." The cabin had only one bed, which Bugel took for himself. Glanville, the former Oiler coach who so far this year has guided Atlanta to a 3–9 mark, slept on layers of old newspapers. "We tried to make them as soft as possible," says Bugel. "He'd either sleep on the funnies or on the sports section."

SHAME HAS NO PRICE

After weighing the contents of the 60-page report on the Patriots–Lisa Olson sexual-harassment case prepared by special counsel Phillip Heymann, Tagliabue last week levied fines totaling $22,500 against three New England players and $50,000 against the team. But, says Tagliabue, "I was tempted to impose no fines. I don't have any doubt about what Zeke Mowatt did. [According to Heymann's report, Mowatt 'purposely displayed himself to (Olson) in a suggestive way.'] But one of the reasons you impose sanctions is to try to deter future similar behavior, and I don't think the people involved need much more of a deterrent."

In other words, Tagliabue believed that the guilty parties had suffered substantially from the tremendous amount of publicity—99% of it bad—generated by the incident. That's also why Mowatt's fine ($12,500) for harassing Olson in the Pats' locker room on Sept. 17 is only 45% of what Bengal coach Sam Wyche was fined ($27,941.18) for barring a female reporter from the Cincinnati locker room after a defeat on Oct. 1 in Seattle. Wyche had violated the league's media policy on two previous occasions in his seven seasons as coach. Tagliabue believes that Wyche's defiance was likely to continue unless he was heavily fined.

MEN OF TROY

In Steve Walsh's return to Texas Stadium as quarterback of the Saints on Sunday, he threw for 177 yards. The man he couldn't beat out for the Cowboys' starting job, Troy Aikman, threw for 177. New Orleans ran for 113 yards. Dallas ran for 113. The difference in the Cowboys' 17–13 win? A hot Aikman in the second half, during which he completed 11 of 11 passes and Dallas scored all of its points.

"It's like when a basketball player gets hot," Aikman said after finishing with 15 completions in 21 pass attempts. "When you're on, you're on." Aikman said a cordial hello to his old rival before the kickoff, but since they weren't close as teammates, they didn't pal around before or after the game.

That was better for everyone, really, as was the trade of Walsh to the Saints in September. "I've never said this before," said Cowboy coach Jimmy Johnson, "but I couldn't get close to Troy as long as Steve was here."

THE BUCS STOPPED HERE

With the not-unexpected firing of Ray Perkins as coach of Tampa Bay on Monday—"We haven't gotten it done, and I realize that," said Perkins, who was 19–41 in three-plus seasons—the Buccaneers will now be looking for a marquee guy to succeed him. That's too bad. What the Bucs need is a bright coaching prospect who can rebuild the team from scratch.

Look for Tampa Bay to inquire, if it hasn't done so already, about the availability of former 49er coach Bill Walsh to double as coach and general manager. (A source close to Walsh says the NBC analyst has had at least three feelers this season exploring his possible return to football in a coaching or management capacity.) Another candidate might be Giants coach Bill Parcells, who has one year left on a four-year, $3.2 million contract. As-

Billups can fire up his $200,000 dream machine, a Lamborghini Countach, from afar.

DAVID WALBERG

sistant head coach Richard Williamson will serve as the Bucs' interim coach for the remainder of the season.

DISPATCHES

World League of American Football president Mike Lynn is finalizing ownership agreements for franchises in Barcelona and Frankfurt, and he has issued this desperate plea: "Wanted: American football coaches who can speak German, Spanish or French. Apply immediately." Lynn believes that having coaches in Frankfort, Barcelona and bilingual Montreal (site of another WLAF franchise) who can speak the native language is crucial. . . . Look for the Chargers to send Arthur Cox, their 290-pound tight end, packing after the season. Not only did his fumbles with 48 seconds left in regulation and on the third play of overtime enable the Seahawks to beat San Diego 13–10 on Nov. 25, but Cox also spit in the face of Seattle linebacker Joe Cain during the game. The previous week he kicked Chiefs linebacker Percy Snow. . . . Maybe the NFL should send Jesse Jackson to New England. He showed up at a Redskins practice last week and talked to the players about their responsibility to the community as role models.

THE END ZONE

Sure, Bengal cornerback Lewis Billups plays on what might be the worst defense in the NFL, but he also owns what probably is the best car in the league. It's a 1987 white Lamborghini Countach, a model no longer made, with a top speed of 183 mph. The car had 7,500 miles on the odometer when Billups bought it in '89 for $200,000. Now he drives it to practice on Fridays and Saturdays.

The car has a remote-control ignition system, which allows Billups to start the engine from as far away as 100 feet with a device that fits on his key ring. Sometimes he startles unknowing teammates by pointing at the car from a distance and yelling, "Start, car!"

"When I was nine or 10, the first time I saw a Lamborghini, I said, 'I'm going to get one of those,' " says Billups. "I sometimes like to drive it without the radio on—just to listen to the engine."

Billups was ticketed by Kentucky State Police for driving 105 mph on I-75 last month. Not to worry. He was driving his Porsche 911. ■

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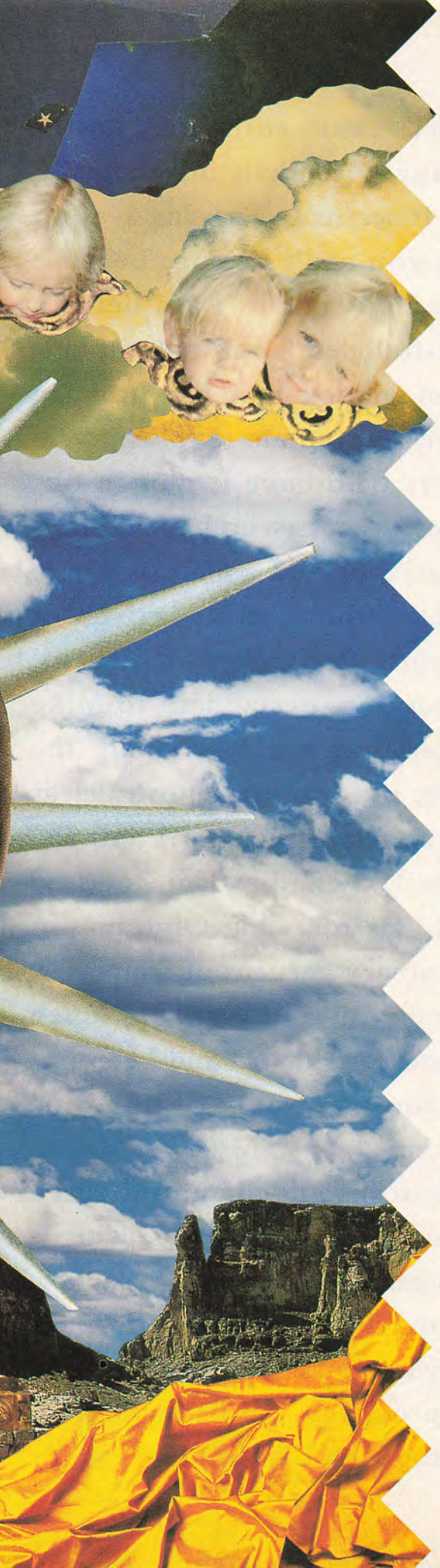

YOU CAN'T BECOME A SPORTS IMMORTAL, SAYS DON KING, WITHOUT FOLLICLES OF FABULOUS FECUNDITY ▣ BY FRANZ LIDZ

FROM HAIR TO ETERNITY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANER CANDELARIO

THE BEST HEAD OF HAIR IN SPORTS LEAPS FROM DON KING'S temples as if galvanized, its fuzzy tendrils intercepting signals from distant galaxies. It seems to jerk his eyes up and his mouth open, though you can't be sure because King's mouth is always open anyway. I am here to commune with boxing's shock-follicled fabulist about hair and athletics. For days I've been tangled up in hair heritage and hair heretics. I've interviewed female tennis players who pluck hair out and hockey players who have it woven on; swimmers who shave it off and basketball players who have designs shaved in; a pitcher paid to grow a mustache and a first baseman fined for sprouting sideburns. I've tracked down many artistes of the scalp: Barbershop Mike, the silhouette draftsman of Harlem, whose etchings run from Michael Jordan in a reverse jam to Mike Tyson in a half-dozen stances of belligerence; Pasquale Gallo, the Greenwich Village stylist who created the mushroom, a postnuclear 'do that suggests an explosion over Los Alamos, N.M.; and the legendary Gary Bray, who coached the U.S. Ladies Hairdressing Team to a gold medal at the 1984 World Hairdressing Olympics in Las Vegas. I've seen tresses shorn into topiary gardens of staircases, slopes, spikes, fences and Gumbys; flattops you could eat your lunch off; shaggy perms that look like they had caught fire and been put out with Louisville Sluggers. As it turns out, none of this came close to preparing me for the don of Kings. My dinner with Don unfolds on a chintz-covered couch at his gilded and mirrored Manhattan town house. In his sandals and gray silk pajamas, King is as genial as a used-car salesman and as exhortatory as a preacher. Between fistsful of honey Teddy Grahams, he talks about all things hairy — all things, that is, except his hairy lawsuits. His conversation soars effortlessly through speculation, prophecy and hallucination. Naturally, everything he says comes off the top of his head.

"In the kingdoms and fiefdoms during the Inquisition, a serf's cruelest punishment was to have his or her hair lopped off. Bette Davis loved to render her subjects bald. She deprived them of their beauty, pride and dignity."

"The first thing many sports figures do after gaining wealth and fame is alter their hairstyles to look like the big stars: Willis, Paar, Gable."

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED: Tell the truth. How did you survive the electrocution?

King: The truth is that my hair is an aura from God. Until 1971 it was kinky and nappy and burry, like any other black man's. Then one night I was in bed with my lovely wife, Henrietta, when suddenly my head got to rumbling. It felt like a volcanic eruption. *Ping! Ping! Ping!* Henrietta shook me and said, "Look at your head! Your hair is half up and half down!" And she was right: All them curls was straightening out and straightening up. Each strand stood erect, pristine and beautiful, reaching for the heavens on its own individual stimulation.

SI: What did you make of this hair-raising experience?

King: I was alarmed. Don't you see, I'd been traumatized. I'd just spent four years in prison for manslaughter, and I'm laying there in the free world wondering what direction I'm gonna go in next. I knew it wasn't back to the numbers business, where I came from. So the next morning I went down to the barbershop to get a haircut. The barber put his clippers to my hair, but all he got was static electricity. There were shocks and fiery sparks and I heard a *snap, crackle, pop!*

SI: Haven't I heard those sounds before?

King: Not in a barbershop! Those clippers were giving me an awful migraine. I had to get out of that barbershop. I had to run. Being a religious person like myself, I looked up the Scriptures and found out the Lord did it to me. I thought, Whaddya know, I've been chosen by God! He made every shank a citadel. He had given my hair abandon that could not be controlled. No one can beat me over the head to make me submit. My hair will not be conquered!

SI: Didn't Samson say that?

King: Indubitably. I am the black Samson. But I don't think the Lord wants me pushing down no temples. He wants me to build them up and demonstrate in this country called America that you can be somebody—in spite of insurmountable obstacles and impediments—as a black American vis-à-vis a white American.

SI: What was your hair like before this awesome power was bestowed on you?

King: I used to have my hair cut off and be glad about it. The barber would clip, clip, clip and snip, snip, snip. But even then, while my hair was dying on the vine, I felt its power. It got under my skin, up around my neck and behind my ears, making me uncomfortable and causing me terrible mental frustration. Oh, the horror! Even after the barber brushed my neck and shook talcum on it, the little hairs would still be crawling around my back, shouting, "Why did you do this to me, sir? Why did you kill me? Come back! I'm still alive! Get me!" Hair that's cut fights back. It rebels! And it always gets the last laugh, continuing to grow even when the rest of you is laid out on the slab.

SI: But hair doesn't grow after death. It's a myth.

King: I'll take your word for it. I sure ain't closing my casket from the inside to find

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out. Whatever energy remains in the body may make hair look like it's growing after death. Hair is like a fungus, maybe. Fungus grows on dead things, so you never know.

SI: Hair is just strings of dead protein.

King: Dead!?! Hair lives! It's *alive*! The ads say: "Let your hair breathe!" How can it breathe if it ain't living? Another scam must be going down.

SI: A cabalistic theory in Orthodox Judaism holds that the excess of the mind flows from the head in the form of hair.

King: The activity of the brain is what generates hair growth. That's why a lot of people go bald: They overactivate their craniums and knock their hair out. My own hair stands sentry over a brain that can emulate and imitate any of the great thinkers of yesteryear. Thanks to my hair, I will go down in history as one of the great thinkers. No matter how they look at it, no matter what they say or do, I've had a great career, a phenomenal career. Certainly, I've had my trauma, my travails, my ups, my downs, but still I've persevered, I've prevailed. And I've done it without the gun, the club or the knife. I've done it with wit and cunning and intellect.

SI: Don't forget understatement.

King: I won't.

SI: Roy Blount, the published plumageologist, thinks wild hair caused civilization. According to his hair theory of human evolution, early hominids were always tossing their heads back to get the hair out of their eyes. The longer it got, the more they had to shift their weight to their haunches and kick at their hair with their front feet. Before long, they were standing up. Their brains relaxed and enlarged, and pretty soon the thought occurred to them to cut some of their hair off with a sharp rock. Through technology, they could detach a part of their body and hold it. Blount says this act was fraught with all sorts of symbolic implications.

King: Throughout eternity, hair has had symbolic power. It's been a crown of honor, a cloak of comfort. When you're cold, it warms you. When you're hungry, it feeds you. . . .

SI: Feeds you!

King: Indubitably. Hair nourishes me with its intricate power. No question about it. It's an attention-grabber that gives me the opportunity to present whatever story I want, for better or worse. Without that attention, I might not get a chance to say anything. People across the country see what they consider my outlandish—and what I consider my magnificent—coiffure and follow my example. I'm a walking billboard. Joe Louis had to fight 14 years to make the Hall of Fame. Babe Ruth had to hit 60 home runs. Ty Cobb had to hit a triple play! But I made it on hair.

SI: Where is this Hall of Fame?

King: In the minds and hearts of the little mothers—black and white—who say to their babies, "Here comes Don King. I wonder what he wants. I bet something wondrous is about to happen, an extravaganza second to none." With no hair I'd be just like every other nigger walking down the hall or the sideway. If I was bald, people would say, "Do you know Don King?" And I'd say, "Yes." They'd say, "You look a great deal like him, but you don't have The Hair." This way, they know it's me for sure.

SI: There *is* a striking resemblance.
King: There's a reason for that.
SI: Would anyone listen to a bald Don King?
King: Let me just say that I am an instrument of the Lord, and He is using me as a conduit. He didn't give me any other facial distinguishments. He took me from the pits of despair and through my hair gave me hope, knowledge and international recognition. I'm world-renowned now. In fact, I'm known all over the world. The power of my hair radiates inwardly and outwardly. It fertilizes new thoughts and activates the churning of the cerebellum and the medulla. The poet John Donne said many years ago: "No man's an island, a train to himself. Every man's a member of the continent and a part of the main. And when the death bell tolls, does it not toll for thee?" For whom the bell tolls, bro.
SI: Hemingway was alleged to be a baldhead freak.
King: Margaux or Mariel?
SI: Ernest.
King: What's the name of his hair book?
SI: To Have and Have Not?
King: I must have been thinking of the one he wrote about arms.
SI: I think *A Farewell to Hair* was just a working title.
King: Indubitably.
SI: Actually, Hemingway shaved his head twice. Once after he got lice in Turkey, and another time on a safari in Africa.
King: Hemingway was a very excellent writer, and his works are certainly historical. He had a brilliant mind, so naturally his hair would have grown to great lengths. That kind of brainpower makes your hair grow. So being a perceptive and ingenious young man, Hemingway readily perceived that the Africans in the bush kept their hair short to avoid problems caused by having to go through the vines and leaves and twigs. Imagine all the bugs that might have cohabitated in his hair, making nests in that hot heat. In Africa, there is no long hair. Only in Shakespeare's Egypt do you find the long, flowing locks of Antony and Cleopatra.
SI: One of Antony's lines seems to describe you: "My very hairs do mutiny."
King: How about the Bard's immortal *Merchant of Venice*, in which Sherlock—or whoever he was—was going to marry What's Her Name. After grabbing her hairpiece and bewigging herself, she defended him in his case of being whatever he was in the most eloquent and articulate fashion.
SI: Indubitably.
King: In the kingdoms and fiefdoms during the Inquisition, a serf's cruelest punishment was to have his or her hair lopped off. Bette Davis loved to render her subjects bald.
SI: I didn't know she was around then.
King: I'm talking about the movie. As Queen Elizabeth, she deprived the British underclass of their beauty, their pride, their dignity. It was not unlike the Old South. Slavery in America stripped the black man of his cultural existence, his religious existence, his mythological existence, and cloned him to be a servant of the master. Even in the 1940s and '50s he had to repeat the Big Lie, that he was worthless, shiftless and brainless. He stole, he cheated, he could hardly func-

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tion. He wished he was white. Black athletes couldn't be white unless their hair was straight and silky. So they went out and conked it with all sorts of lethal and abusive chemicals.

SI: The Afro blossomed in the Sixties as an emblem of unity and ethnic pride.

King: It instilled a much-needed self-determination. The Afro was wild and woolly. It let black athletes rebel against convention while they campaigned for freedom, justice and equality. It proclaimed: "I'm unified, I'm within myself and I'm proud." It made it so the black athlete of today can afford to get his hair cut.

SI: What part, if any, did you play in this scheme?

King: I have to admit that I had a lot to do with the reckless abandon in the hair-growth of people in general and athletes in the specific. My phenomenal success is unique, rare and wonderful. In the jargon of the ghetto—a self-made vernacular we call ghettoese—bad is good. When you say how bad I am, you're really saying how much better I am. The Justice Department has charged me with every known crime and misdemeanor—kickbacks, racketeering, ticket scalping, skimming, fixing fights, preordaining them, vitiating officials and laundering money. The only thing they missed was kidnapping the Lindbergh baby. But the missing link is the burden of factual proof. And while I would be feeling aggrieved and somewhat disgruntled about what they write about me in *Newsweek*, *The New York Times* and SPORTS ILLUSTRATED, my people love it. The tirades and salvos of negativism in the media only fill me with positivism, for I defy convention and tradition. Convention is vanity, and vanity is self-destruction. The vain athlete doesn't make rational, reasonable, pragmatic decisions. He survives solely on ego. He doesn't listen to his hair!

"Poor Cosell's got no hair. He had to go out and get an artificial substitute. He may tell it like it is, but he should have left it like it was."

SI: What about tennis players like Andre Agassi who constantly preen for adoring fans?

King: That's vanity! He's just telling you he's on a self-destruct course.

SI: So you think Agassi's hair will eventually do him in?

King: Not his hair, his vanity. He primps at the expense of his talent. Nowadays, the first thing many sports figures do after gaining wealth and fame is alter their hairstyle to a more traditional one. It's a way of saying they've made it. They demand, "Get me something that will make me look like the big stars: Clark Gable, Bruce Willis, Jack Paar. . . ."

SI: Jack Paar!?

King: Sure. These big athletes try to emulate and imitate instead of just being themselves. They forget what brought them to what they are: hard work, dedication, tenacity, doggedness. The black athlete says, "I've got a limo, a Rolls, my kids go to private school, but gee, something's missing." They sound out the wife: "Henrietta, what would you think if I get me some of that wavy hair like the white athlete's got?" When they change the hair that got them to where they are, they lose their values and their identity. The desire to be identifiable is what makes people do what they do. That's why Howard Cosell bought a wig. But his hair is man-made. My hair is God-made. That's the difference. But the symbolism is definitely there. In fact, I represent the symbolism.

SI: The first athlete to use his hair symbolically may have been Ernie Holmes, the Pittsburgh Steelers' defensive lineman who in 1975 had his hair sculpted into the shape of an arrow. Holmes said he wanted to know where he was going.

King: It's always good to use your head for something other than a hat rack.

SI: A lot of contemporary athletes have messages shaved into their hair. Boxer Jorge Paez wore NO DRUGS in his hairdo during his April featherweight title bout. Dennis Rodman of the Detroit Pistons had I LOVE ALEXIS, referring to his daughter. How long before we see corporate logos? When will fighters start having DON KING PRODUCTIONS stenciled into their hair?

King: I don't believe a fighter's hair should be tampered with. It's a great ornamental bush that can be pruned, but not chopped to the roots. A naked head is an exposed brain venue. A boxer's venue

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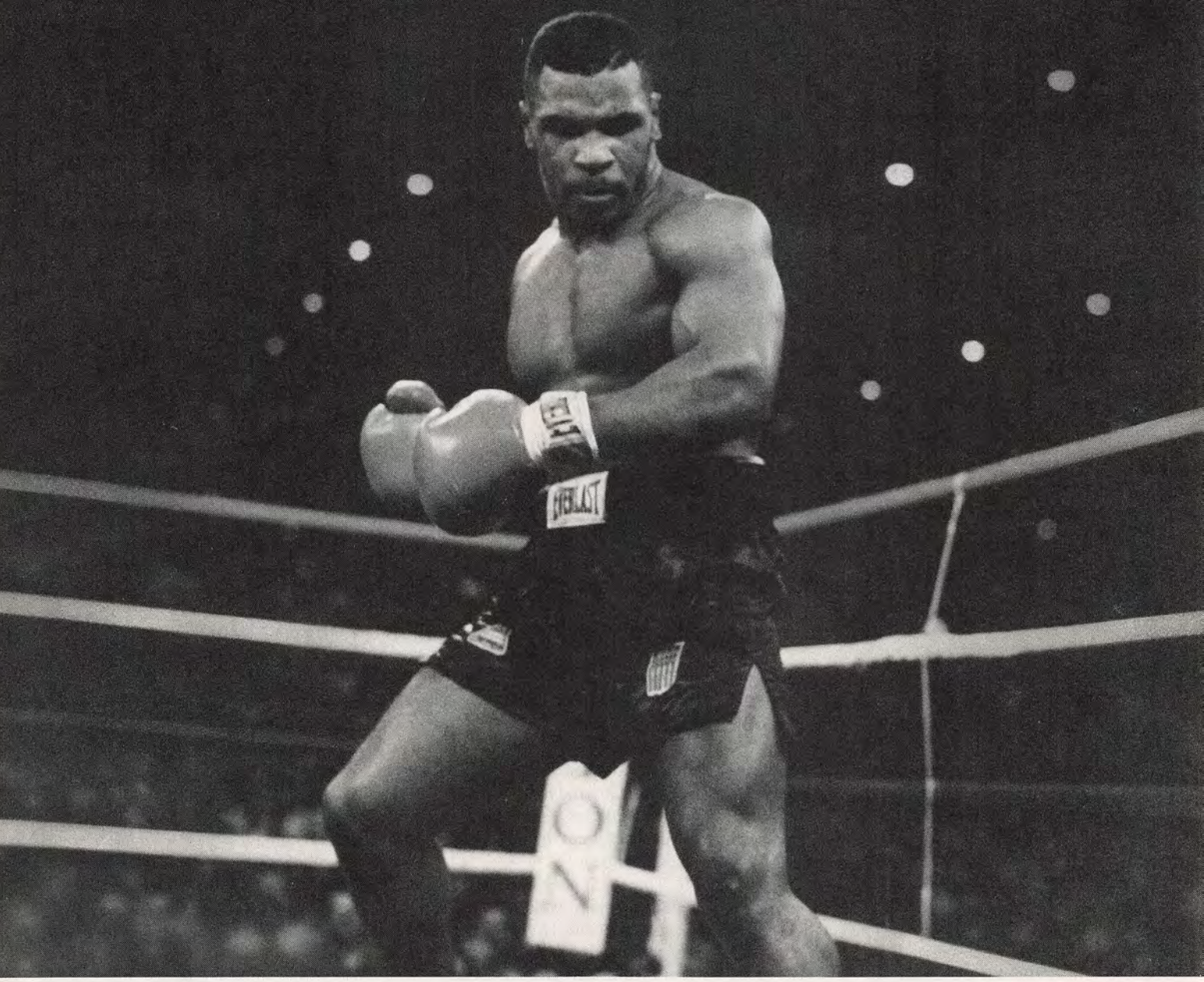

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"Oh, how wonderful and different you look, Chrissie. I've never seen you so light. Your countenance is coming through so provocatively."

can be destroyed much more easily if it's without a protective covering.

SI: Are most boxers aware of the power of hair?

King: The sad commentary is that most of them are not. They see hair as a nuisance. They clip it off and toss it away like confetti. Unless you grasp the significance of hair, you cannot know the power instilled in it.

SI: How tight is Tyson's grasp on hair?

King: He looks at mine and laughs at me. I look at his and laugh at him. He says, "Whaddya laughin' at?" I say, "I'm laughin' because you talk about all the hair on your head when you hardly got no hair on that head." So you see, this brings a repartee and a rejoinder. Through hair, we've got something to banter about, and I can tell him what significance my hair has vis-à-vis his has in significance. Tyson's hair really only becomes a critical factor in training. His opponents become afeared when they see hair budding on his face and under his chin. It tells a tale without him having to open his mouth.

SI: When Tyson lost to Buster Douglas, was his hair unmanageable or just mismanaged?

King: I don't think hair had nothing to do with it. It would only have been a complement. Basically and fundamentally, it was the icing on the cake.

SI: What happens to prizefighters who shave their heads?

King: That great book of parables, the Bible, tells us that if your right eye offends thee, pluck it out. If your right arm offends thee, cut it off. It is far better to lose a part of the body than the whole body. One asks how a blind man can live while unable to see the lilies of the valley, the flowers, the rivers and the flowings. But the body has ways of substituting, of adjusting. Take Marvelous Marvin Hagler. When he balded himself, his body became vulnerable and had to compensate. His mind asked, Should we move in another direction and start other mechanisms to generate the same excitement? Yes, said his central nervous system. So Hagler worked that much harder to be the intimidator he was purporting to be. Hairless, Hagler had to rely on brute strength, physical stamina and a mental aggressiveness. He became a champion unknowingly, and perhaps unwittingly.

SI: Can George Foreman win back the heavyweight title without hair?

King: Foreman is 42. If he didn't have his chrome-dome, he'd be gray. So rather than put the coloration and the dye in it and have people perceive him as older than he really is, he cut it off. Sportswriters had been having a field day writing about Old Man Methuselah and how his being in the ring was a threat to his safety. But as he became more formidable with each outing, they dropped the safety angle and viewed him as an incredible resurrection of what they would like themselves to be at that age.

SI: So Foreman's lack of hair works to his advantage?

King: Yes, but only because it projects intimidation. He's the bald-headed man with the grim eyes who can glare at you and stare at you. Don't forget: that's what

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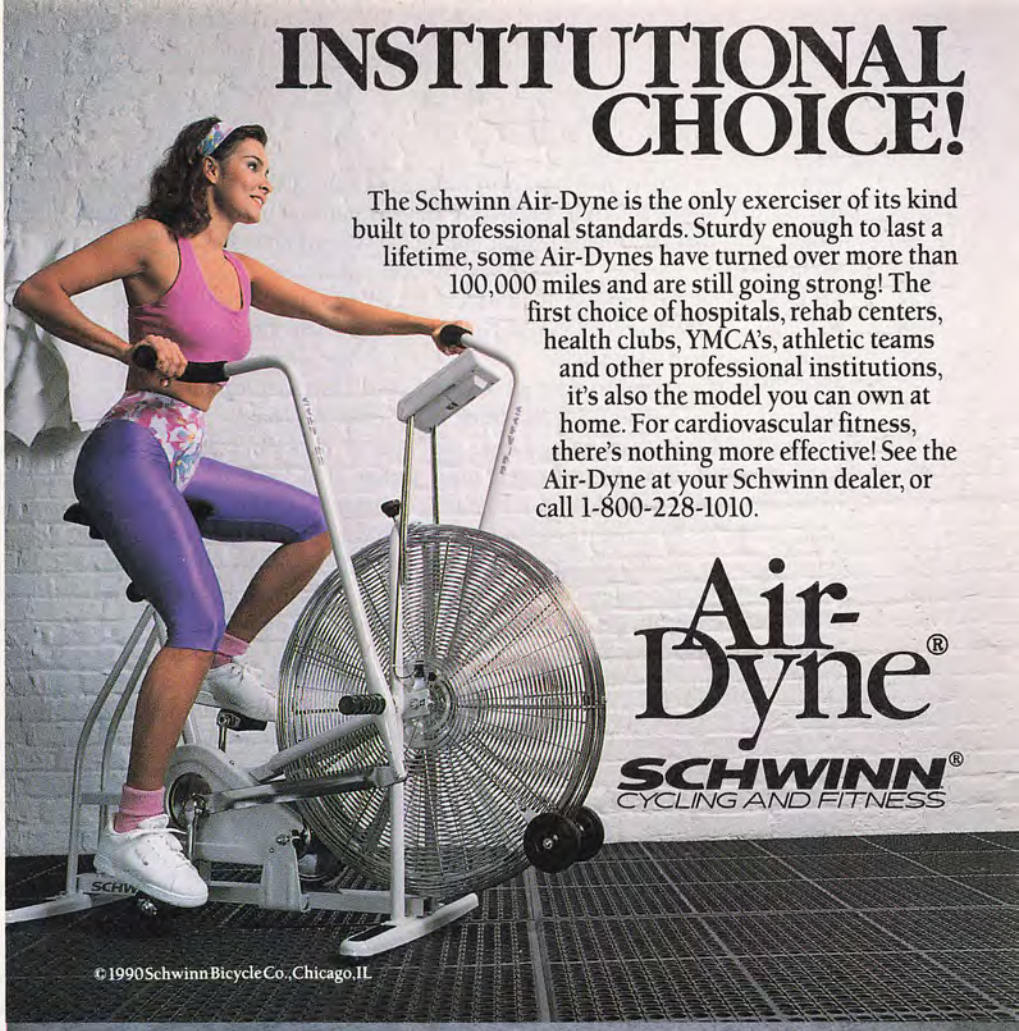

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he was doing when he *had* hair. Now he's the Stare Without No Hair. Oddjob, the baldie from that 007 movie. Much more frightening.

SI: How about dreadlocks? John McEnroe once said he feared Yannick Noah's dreads more than his game.

King: Well, you've got to take the boy at his word, even if he was being facetious. If it provoked such a statement, there's got to be *some* substance to it. Perception is reality to those who don't understand what reality really is. And you find yourself in a very precarious and untenable position of having people perceive you to be something you ain't. So perception has its qualities. And its setbacks.

SI: When swimmers shave down before meets, the benefits are more psychological than physiological. They do it to psych out the opposition.

King: It really depends on how much strength a swimmer has in the various points of resistance on his head, and whether that swimmer's relative strength overcomes it vis-à-vis a person who lacks this resistance. Or whether the swimmer shaved his hair into a mushroom which, when wet, would drag. Over a long time it would take its toll, but in short spurts it could be overcome. The key is what the swimmer thinks. Convince a man against his will, and he'll be of the same opinion still.

SI: It's been said that Chris Evert's hairstyle and tennis game became more aggressive at the same time.

King: The hair itself could have been the derivative from whence her aggression came. It may have made her more intoxicating, more captivating. People would say, "Oh, how wonderful and different you look, Chrissie. I've never seen you so light. Your countenance is coming through so provocatively." All these appraisings could have gotten her adrenaline pumping, so that her hair and her game become indelibly meshed.

SI: Who else has become at one with his or her hair?

King: Donald Trump. He just trims his hair. He don't want a lock to fall out of place. His coiffure is always in place. If you look closely, you'll see that he only wears one suit. He's got a copy in his closet and alternates them every other day. He don't want nothing to change because this is the look that did it, baby. This is the quintessential look: a power suit and a power haircut. Why do they call the lion the king of the jungle? It's because of the magnificent mane he has. That's his hair, his crown and glory. When he barks, everyone listens.

SI: Any athletes with power cuts?

King: I can only think of one.

SI: Who's that?

King: Michael Jordan.

SI: But he's bald!

King: He *looks* bald, but really there's a thin, thin layer of hair that retains the moisture. He keeps it cropped real close so you can see the thought waves and the way it glistens like flowers in the morning dew. When the light hits, Jordan throws his head right in his opponent's face. The rolling sweat and this dewy glistening have a kind of a mirrored effect, blinding the other team with their beauty. In that instant, Jordan bobs his head, soars through the air and *scores*! The glare from his little head, shiny-wet with dew on all sides, makes him a powerful man on the basketball court.

SI: If hair harbors so much power, why would you shave your whiskers?

King: The significant part of my power is on my head. The Lord hasn't done any miracles on my beard. If it grew up into my eyes and became part of the total scope, I probably wouldn't cut it, either.

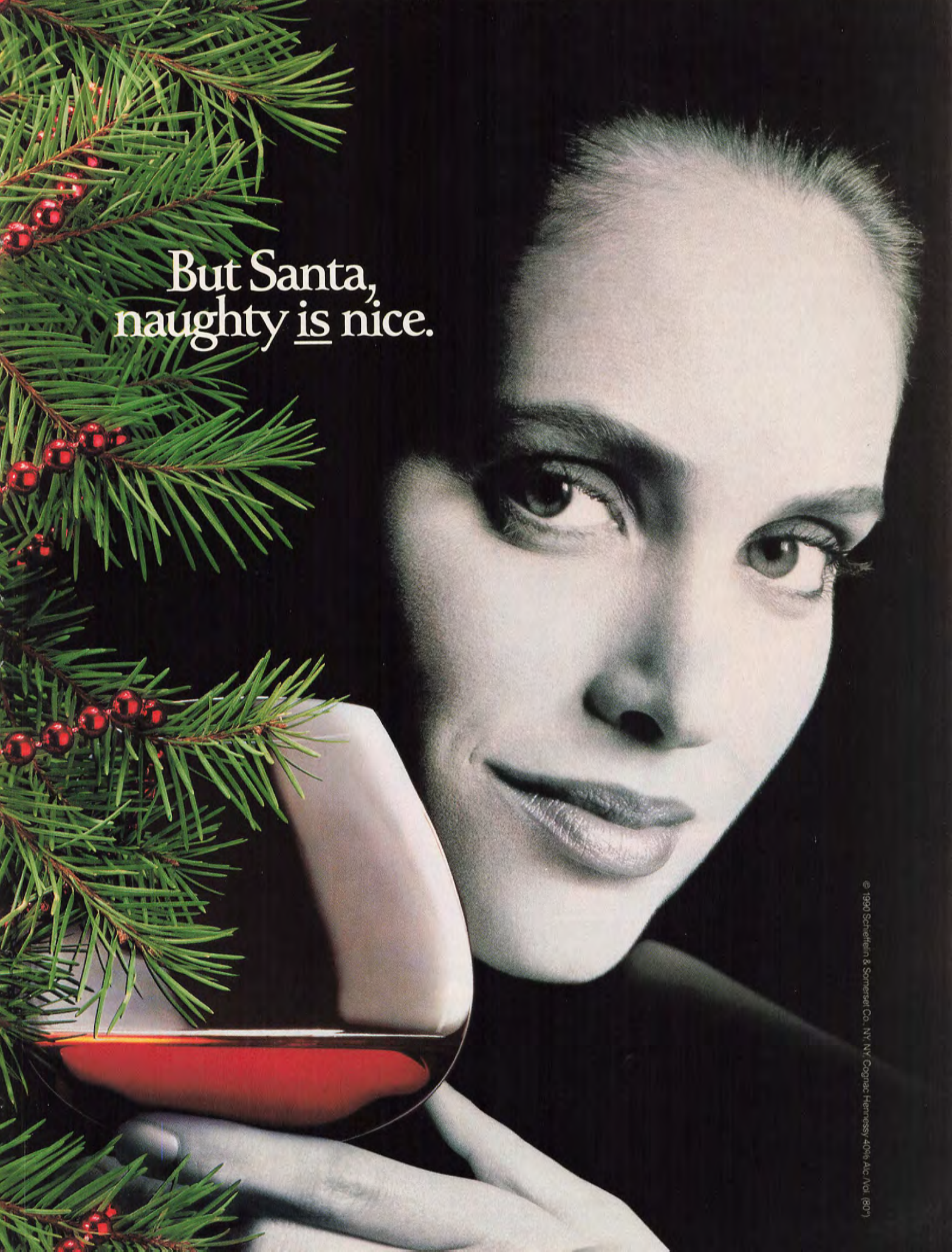
SI: You probably already knew that if you collected all your whiskers for 16 years, you'd have enough to form a one-pound ball.

King: I doubt the hairs on my head go the full 16 ounces. I'm not going to mow them just to weigh them. I need to keep a lot stored up so that when I don't have much left, I'll still have some in escrow. Part of the reason men shed their hair is that they work themselves so hard that they knocked out the room in their brains for the roots. Poor Cosell got to the age where he was no longer self-sustaining in the hair-growth department. He didn't prepare for the inevitable. Maybe if he hadn't had all those haircuts, his hair would be around today.

SI: Cosell's toupee has a life of its own. On TV, it almost seemed to be moving.

King: He may tell it like it is, but he should have left it like it was. Which reminds me of a poem I wrote:

Little spider on the wall,
Ain't got no hair at all.
Ain't got no comb to comb his hair,
So what it care?
Ain't got no hair.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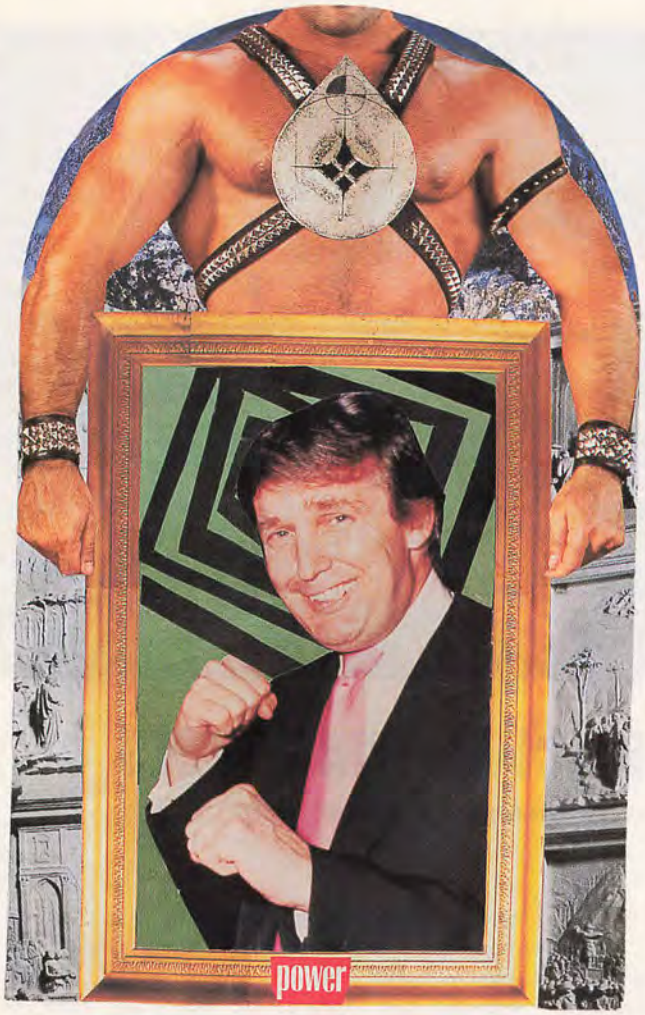
SI: What reminds you?
King: That Howard's got no hair. He had to go out and get an artificial substitute. You can buy hair, but you can't buy its power.
SI: Toupees don't secrete power?
King: They do, but it's dead power. Bald men moan, "My head's got to have hair! I can't live without it!" The urge becomes so all-consuming that they're willing to paste mats onto their scalps and have weavers prick at them with needle and thread. Can you conceive of the pain and misery a man must endure to have hair stitched into his skull? And then to have it look like you're wearing a muskrat pelt on your head.
SI: Jon Miller, a Baltimore Orioles' broadcaster, once wore a hairpiece so hideous that people stopped him to ask if he'd consider wearing a hairpiece.
King: That's the power of the want of hair, Jack. That's dead power.
SI: What do you think of athletes who wear curlers?
King: Male or female?
SI: Male, actually. When Dock Ellis was pitching for the Pittsburgh Pirates in the '70s, he sometimes worked out in curlers. The story goes that he was warming up for a game when a teammate said, "I've been meaning to ask you—why is your hair in curlers?" To which Ellis replied, "Oh, after the game I'm going out."
King: In those cases, an athlete must make sure his sport doesn't mess with his head. Dock didn't want his hair to get caught up with the ball or the bat. Instead of having to get it reset in a beauty parlor, he just waited for the game to end, removed the netting and left for the races or wherever. Simultaneously, his date—if she ain't at the ball game—was probably somewhere else getting her hair curled for this gala evening.
SI: What's your position on the role of hair spray in sports?
King: It depends. I don't use nothing on my hair. All I do is wash it and oil it up. Each hair spray is destined to do something unique and extraordinary. So I guess they do the job psychologically as to what you are brainwashed to do before they are even applied. In fact, the word *brainwash* may have been derived from the hair spray.
SI: Jherri curls?
King: The problem with them is that they are not au naturel. My hair is. I don't know how it got here, I don't know why it's here, but I'm trying to find out. The cosmic rays of the sun mold it into a pyramid every morning at five. That's the most powerful time of the day. The skull turns into a subterranean cavern where all the vital brain germs cogitate and congeal and the mechanism and the machinery and the power of the thing dwells. You have the part of the mind for those who are visionary, the part for those content to accept whatever happens, and the part for those who know what it was yesterday, what it is today and can prognosticate about what it will be tomorrow. This machinery operates under the great protective shield of hair.
SI: All this happens at five in the morning?
King: Yeah, five or six. While others dream, my hair parts like the Red Sea, opening my mind to the magnetic fields of the solar system.
SI: How does it feel?
King: S.K.D., which in the ghetto means Something Kinda Different.
SI: Do you try to make deals then?
King: No, I just absorb this spiritual revitalization, this rekindling of an unwavering vision that prepares me for the day's journey, whatever it may be. I tell you, it's exhilarating.
SI: And what do you see when you look in the mirror?
King: I see my hair, a burning bush basted in righteous juices. I say, "Thank you, Lord, for giving me this power you have bestowed upon me to protect me from the evil forces that will beset me today." God is pulling my hair upward into the heavens, holding it aloft for all humanity to see. My hair will remain that way as long as I'm considerate of others and don't let ego and vanity consume me to such a point that I think the world is mine and that the sun resides in me along with the rain and the snow and that I'm all-powerful, omnipotent, omniscient and ubiquitous. It is only when these spiritual vibrations stop cascading to my brain that I will lose the sense of power that catapults me into prominence and motivates me to towering heights. For now, my hair has mastered the universe! When I gaze into the mirror, I never cease to amaze myself. And I say this humbly. ■



"Donald Trump just trims his hair. He don't want nothing to change because that is the look that did it, baby."

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The author put pedal to the metal on the drag strip

BY SONJA STEPTOE

After issuing a stern warning, the man in the uniform and mirrored sunglasses slams the door and walks away from my car. He isn't a policeman, and he wasn't scolding me for speeding. Quite the opposite. I was chewed out for going too *slow*.

It's the first day of qualifying at the National Hot Rod Association Mile-High Nationals at Bandimere Speedway in Morrison, Colo. I'm nervous and confused in front of 6,000 restless spectators. The 1978 black Plymouth Volare station wagon I'm driving sits idling in a one-inch-deep water puddle just behind the starting line because I forgot to execute the "burnout." Had things gone right, billows of crowd-pleasing smoke would be enveloping the car. Instead, the Plymouth looks as if it were simply parked in a mall lot after a rain shower. Before slamming the door, the NHRA official tells me, in what seems a threatening tone, to "put it in gear and get going."

Aha. When I hear the word "gear," I realize that I failed to shift out of neutral, which explains why there was no smoke when I stomped on the gas pedal and the needle on the tachometer rose to 5,000 rpm. Once I put the car in gear, the tires spin and smoke fills the rear wheel wells, signaling that the tires are sufficiently heated to get a good grip on the asphalt in the pending race. I move to the starting line and manage to leave just as the green light comes on. Later, my crew chief, Jay Sanders, and others congratulate me. They say the race announcer proclaimed it a "perfect light." But as I leave the starting line, every window in the car is rolled up tight and I am wearing earplugs and a crash helmet, so I have little chance to savor my moment of glory.

It's a pity, because it is one of the few times I would do something right during the competition. As I head down the quarter-mile straightaway during the first pass—dragspeak for a run down the quarter-mile-long track—I again forget to shift gears, until the engine screams so loudly that even I hear it. After crossing the finish line at 90.95 mph and slowing down, I notice that the engine temperature is 240°. Oops. I also didn't turn on the fan as I crossed the finish line, which keeps the engine from overheating after a run.

I have a legitimate excuse for being so inept. I don't own a car and rarely drive. I do have a license, but I live in New York City, where being a car owner and driver is an expensive frustration. So I usually travel by subway or taxi. What's more, I can't be called well-versed in the finer points of drag racing. This is the first time I have ever been to such an event, much less taken the wheel of one of the cars. I am in this contest through the generosity of car owners Judy and Jack McCormack—and with the permission of the NHRA—to get a firsthand look at the sport.

Drag racing is an expensive sport that is more business than hobby for most participants, though it seems to be politic for car owners not to say they make any money from their sport. The majority of cars competing in national events are custom-built, carefully engineered machines. However, at the other end of the spectrum are relatively inexpensive cars like the one I drove, known in drag racing parlance as "grocery-getters." Mine has a fairly tame 318-cubic-inch, 240-horsepower V-8. Wipe off the sponsors' decals and the car would look at home in any suburban driveway. Jack McCormack, an auto parts representative from Milford, Mich., who owns a fleet of race cars, says he spends only about $1,000 a year maintaining the Volare. He picked up the car in 1978 for $5,400 and put in another $25,000 turning it into a racing machine.

Prices for preparing cars for even the NHRA "stock" classes start at about $10,000, according to Bob Kammer, the Dayton high-performance engine specialist who did much of the work on the Volare. Each time a Funny Car or a Top Fuel vehicle—the fastest and most expensive of all dragsters—goes down the track in five seconds or less, it works out to cost the owner $4,500 in used-up parts and other expenses. Larry Minor, a 50-year-old potato farmer and cattle rancher and a former drag and off-road racer from San Jacinto, Calif., figures it costs $940,000 a year for him to maintain the

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BILL SALLAZ

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Top Fuel car driven by three-time world champion Shirley Muldowney.

But drivers in the pro categories have endorsement contracts and can earn between $7,000 and $25,000 per event in prize money, excluding sponsor bonuses. Racers in the lower tiers must be either personally wealthy or highly resourceful, because expenses, which typically run between $1,000 and $1,500 a race weekend, usually eat up whatever prize money they win.

"A lot of times, the families are the pit crew," says 41-year-old Mary Jean Hale, standing outside the Hales' big red combination race car transporter–motor home parked in the pit area. She keeps the two Super Stock–class race cars looking sharp, organizes the pit, changes spark plugs and makes sure her husband, Jim, has the tools he needs for engine repairs between runs. The Hales own a truck body shop and a speed-equipment business in Van Buren, Ark. The NHRA doesn't keep statistics on the gender of its 70,000 members, but the sport includes many female drivers, mechanics, crew chiefs and officials.

The adrenaline was flowing fast as Steptoe pointed for the NHRA's Mile-High Nationals.

A perfect start the first time out was not an indicator of races to come.

Judy McCormack and I race the Volare in the stock eliminator category, one of the lowest non-professional drag racing classifications. Judy is a 47-year-old bookkeeper and grandmother of two who has been competing since 1963 and has set eight NHRA speed records. Pam Sanders, 38, is a secretary who is married to my crew chief, Jay, and has won several regional drag racing titles since 1971.

However, drag racing definitely isn't for the fainthearted, or the tender-eared, both of which I am. All weekend, I wear earplugs and keep a pair of shooters' ear guards nearby to cope with the din of high-revving engines being raced, tuned and, occasionally, blown sky-high. Although I will drive my car as fast as 97.44 mph and get down the track in 14.024 seconds during the competition, I am hardly ready to step into the Funny Car class.

To be a successful racer, you must not only be fast but also quick. After my first pass, crew chief Sanders and Judy advise me not to bother with the burnout and go straight to the staging lights. They incorrectly assume my perfect start shows that I have mastered the seven tiers of lights in the starting line system—it's called the Christmas tree, because that's what the array resembles. The way it works is that both drivers must turn on individual sets of the two top yellow lights by inching the cars up to the starting line; when those lights come on, it means that both cars are dead even and exactly a quarter-mile away from the finish line. Then, the starter activates three pairs of larger yellow lights that flick on in rapid succession, followed by the green light. The trick is to be quick and to get the car moving precisely when the green light flashes. Lingering too long can mean the difference between crossing the finish line first and watching your opponent's back end for the entire quarter-mile. But you can't be too quick. Leaving just a fraction of a second early activates the red light at the bottom of the tree, disqualifying you from the race. "It's over before it begins if you red-light," says Gene Mosbek, the bearded owner of an auto-repair shop in Elk River, Minn., who is pitted next door to me in a dusty field overlooking the drag strip. "You have to give yourself a chance at the other end."

While I was happy to be spared the water torture for the next run, I knew the perfect light of my first attempt had been a case of beginner's luck. Sure enough, in subsequent qualifying sessions, I failed to duplicate the feat. But at least I qualified. During the first round of the single-elimination competition I not only did the burnout successfully, I also drove smoother and faster than I had at any time. However, I left the line two hundredths of a second too soon. I was disqualified, as the Christmas tree's shining red light informed everyone. Back at my pit, I lamented that I was "just starting to feel comfortable out there" and wished out loud for "one more shot."

The McCormacks and the Sanders contend I'm hooked. Highly unlikely. Although I improved as a driver after my helpless moment in the puddle, I prefer to leave the driving to the New York City Transit Authority. Then again, how do you account for the fact that later in the summer I spent one of my two free weekends at a drag strip? ■

ESPN® SPORTS WEEK

Sat. 12/8 to Fri. 12/14

All Times Eastern

AUTO RACING

Motorweek Illustrated
Monday - 7:30 PM

Secrets of Speed: Reading the Road
Thursday - 7:30 PM

Formula One: 1990 Year in Review
Thursday - 12:30 AM

ESPN SpeedWeek™
Friday - 11 PM

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

NCAA Division III: Championship Game
Saturday - 11:30 AM

NCAA Division II: Championship Game
Monday - 1 PM

GOLF

PGA Tour: Sazale Championship
Third Round
Saturday - 3 PM
Final Round
Sunday - 1 PM

Cadillac Senior PGA Tour: GTE Kaanapali Classic
Second Round
Saturday - 5 PM
Final Round
Sunday - 5 PM

LPGA Tour: World Match Play Championship
Monday - 4 PM
Tuesday - 4:30 PM

PGA Tour: New York Life Classic
Friday - 4:30 PM

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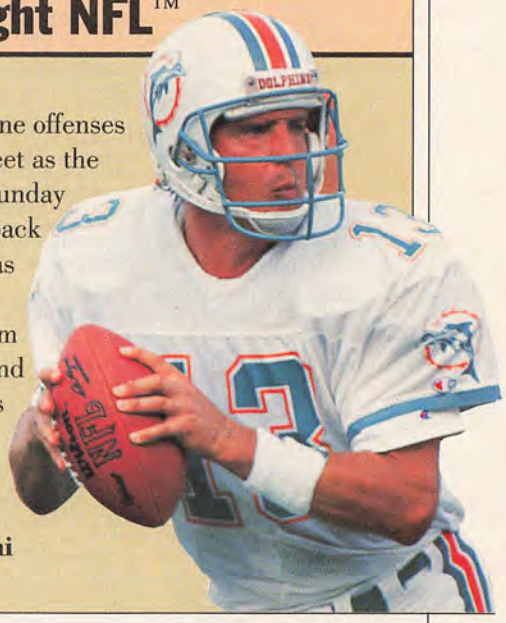
Philadelphia vs. Miami
Sunday - 8 PM



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NFL GameDay™
Sunday - Noon

NFL PrimeTime™
Sunday - 7 PM

Sunday Night NFL™ Philadelphia vs. Miami
Sunday - 8 PM

Zenith NFL Monday Night Matchup
Monday - 8 PM

NFL Monday Night Magazine
Monday - 8:30 PM

OUTDOORS

Expedition Earth: Earthwinds Balloon Flight Preview
Behind the scenes with the Earthwinds crew as they prepare for the first manned balloon flight around the world
Wednesday - 10 PM

1990 Atlantic Blue Marlin Tournament
Thursday - Midnight

RODEO

1990 National Finals
9th Round
Saturday - Midnight
Championship Round
Sunday - 3 PM

SKATING

World Cup of Figure Skating
Friday - 9 PM

SKIING

Subaru Ski World
Friday - 7:30 PM

The Plymouth U.S. Men's Pro Ski Tour
Friday - 8 PM

SPECIALS

Outside the Lines: The Autograph Game
How a hobby became a multi-million dollar business
Thursday - 8 PM

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SUNDAY
7 AM, 11:30 AM, 11 PM, 2 AM

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8:30 AM, 7 PM, 11:30 PM, 2:30 AM

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Tuesday, Wednesday - 12:30 PM
Quarterfinal Round
Thursday, Friday - 12:30 PM

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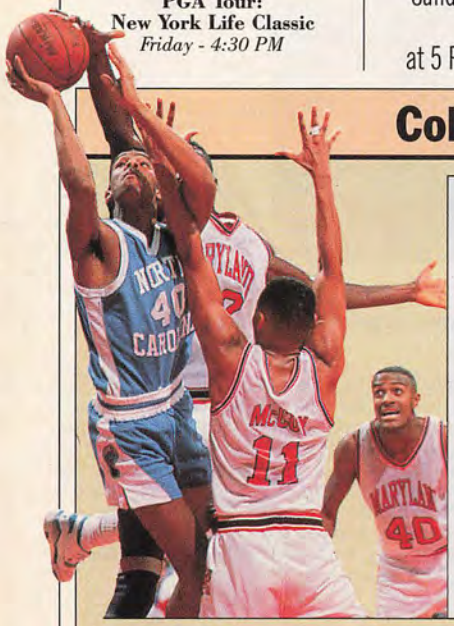
College Basketball



Kansas vs. Kentucky
Saturday - 7:30 PM

Arkansas vs. Missouri
Saturday - 9:30 PM

Kentucky vs. North Carolina
Monday - 9 PM

Providence vs. Boston College
Tuesday - 7:30 PM

Georgia vs. Vanderbilt
Tuesday - 9:30 PM

Seton Hall vs. Villanova
Wednesday - 7:30 PM

Murray State vs. Southern Illinois
Friday - Midnight

A classic confrontation: Kentucky vs. UNC on Monday at 9 PM.

FOR THE RECORD

A Roundup of the Week Nov. 26–Dec. 2 ● Compiled by Amy Nutt

PRO BASKETBALL—The Trail Blazers, on top in the Pacific Division, were handed their first loss of the season, after 11 wins, 123–109 by the Suns. Portland converted only seven of 26 shots in the final period. The Blazers were back on the beam in their next game: They built a 20-point halftime lead and coasted to a 107–92 defeat of the Timberwolves. Then Portland's Clyde Drexler made four free throws in the final 27 seconds of the third overtime period as the Blazers outlasted the SuperSonics 130–124. Seattle also fell victim to the Midwest Division–leading Spurs, 124–111. The Spurs were then done in by the Lakers, who used an 18–2 surge to take a 24-point third-period lead en route to a 97–80 victory. Then, against the Mavericks, San Antonio's David Robinson had 23 points and 12 rebounds in a 109–97 triumph. The Pistons, first in the Central Division, got 25 points from Bill Laimbeer in a 120–97 rout of the nose-diving Hawks, whose season record fell to 4–10. James Edwards' 22 points paced Detroit to a 90–83 defeat of the Knicks. The Bullets ended Detroit's 10-game winning streak with a 21–7 third-quarter spurt on their way to a 94–83 victory. The Celtics won two of three in a week that saw Larry Bird become the 15th NBA player to score 20,000 points *(page 34)*.

BOWLING—DUANE FISHER beat Jess Stayrook 248–244 to win a PBA event and $27,000 in Taylor, Mich.

PRO FOOTBALL—The Bears clinched the NFC Central Division title with a 23–17 roller-coaster win over the Lions. The lead changed hands five times before a Jim Harbaugh–to–Neal Anderson 50-yard touchdown pass sealed the victory for Chicago in overtime. The Vikings humbled the Packers 23–7 for their fifth straight win, while the Bucs ended their six-game losing streak by defeating the Falcons 23–17. The decisive play for Tampa Bay was Vinny Testaverde's 35-yard TD pass to Mark Carrier with 39 seconds left. While the NFC East–leading Giants and the 49ers got ready for their Monday clash, San Francisco on Sunday clinched the NFC West title, thanks to the Saints' 17–13 loss at the hands of the Cowboys. After the AFC East–leading Bills were shocked by the Oilers 27–24 on Monday night, they almost lost again, to the gritty Eagles. Philadelphia scored 23 unanswered points—including six on a 95-yard Randall Cunningham–to–Fred Barnett pass play—after Buffalo had built a 24–0 first-quarter lead. But despite that long gainer, Philly came up on the short end of a 30–23 score. The Redskins rolled over the Dolphins 42–20 as Earnest Byner rushed for 157 yards and three TDs. After trailing by 11 in the fourth quarter, the Cardinals rallied to beat the Colts 20–17. The decisive play was an interception by Phoenix's Cedric Mack of a Jeff George pass that resulted in a Cards touchdown. Charger Marion Butts shredded the Jet defense for 159 yards rushing and two TDs in a 38–17 win. The Raiders, tied with the Chiefs atop the AFC West, beat the Broncos 23–20 when Bo Jackson turned on the afterburners for two second-half TDs. In other games, the Rams ripped the Browns 38–23 as Jim Everett threw for four touchdowns; the Steelers fell to the Bengals 16–12; the Seahawks slid past the Oilers 13–10 in OT; and the Chiefs pummeled the Patriots 37–7.

HOCKEY—It was a so-so week for the division leaders but a high-flying one for the Red Wings. The Blackhawks, in front in the Norris Division, were crushed by hot Detroit 5–1 and 4–3. In the latter game, Chicago rallied for three goals in the third period. The Smythe Division–leading Kings also rallied in the final period against the Wings, after trailing 3–1. Still, L.A. fell 4–3. The Kings went one better in their next rally, getting four goals in the third period to pull out a 4–4 tie against the Blues. The Maple Leafs then broke L.A.'s franchise-record home winning streak at 11 with a 4–3 victory, only their second on the road this season. The Patrick Division–leading Rangers, who began the week by blasting the Sabres 5–0, embarrassed themselves by losing 6–3 to the Caps. Rookie Peter Bondra had a hat trick for Washington. New York looked even worse in losing 5–1 to the hard-checking Flyers, who ended the week riding a 5-0-1 surge. The Rangers recovered to knock off Boston, the Adams Division leader, 5–4, though the Bruins outshot New York 37–20. Earlier Boston had come from behind to beat the Oilers 4–2 and run its record against Edmonton at Boston Garden to 6-0-1 dating back to 1986.

SKIING—FRANCK PICCARD of France won a World Cup men's Super G in Valloire, France, defeating Franz Heinzer of Switzerland by .18 of a second. In women's competition in Val Zoldana, Italy, defending overall champion PETRA KRONBERGER of Austria won a giant slalom and a slalom, beating Vreni Schneider of Switzerland in the former and Ingrid Salvenmoser of Austria in the latter, each by 1.14 seconds.

SOCCER—UCLA beat Rutgers, after a 0–0 tie through four overtimes, 4–3 in penalty kicks to win the NCAA championship, in Tampa.

TENNIS—The UNITED STATES beat Australia 3–2 to win the Davis Cup in St. Petersburg, Fla. *(page 42)*.

MILEPOSTS—AWARDED: The Heisman Trophy, to Brigham Young quarterback TY DETMER *(page 52)*.

DROPPED: By The Athletics Congress, a lifetime ban against two-time world indoor long-jump champion LARRY MYRICKS, 34, for testing positive for a stimulant at three meets during the 1990 indoor season. Myricks will be eligible to compete again on April 13, 1991.

FINED: By the NFL, for misconduct toward *Boston Herald* reporter Lisa Olson in a locker-room incident on Sept. 17, New England Patriots ZEKE MOWATT, $12,500; ROBERT PERRYMAN, $5,000; and MICHAEL TIMPSON, $5,000. The Patriots management was assessed $50,000 for mishandling the incident and its aftermath.

FIRED: As football coach: at Boston College, JACK BICKNELL, 56, who guided the Eagles to a 4–7 record this year and to a 59-55-1 mark and four bowl appearances during his 10 seasons; and at Vanderbilt, WATSON BROWN, 40, under whom the Commodores were 10–45 over the past five years. Colorado offensive coordinator GERRY DINARDO, 38, has been named to succeed Brown.

MODIFIED: A July 1990 decision by the NCAA to ban the defending national champion University of Nevada–Las Vegas basketball team from playing in the '91 NCAA tournament. In exchange for being allowed to appear in the tournament next spring, the Runnin' Rebels accepted new penalties that will bar them from playing on live television in the '91–92 season or participating in the '92 NCAAs. The original ban stemmed from recruiting and other violations that were committed in the 1970s, which were the subject of litigation until 1990 *(page 46)*.

NAMED: As football coach at LSU, CURLEY HALLMAN, 43, replacing MIKE ARCHER, 37, who announced his resignation on Nov. 24. Hallman was succeeded in his old post at Southern Mississippi by JEFF BOWER, 37, formerly the offensive coordinator at Oklahoma State.

RESIGNED: As football coach at Purdue, FRED AKERS, 52, who guided the Boilermakers to a 2–9 record this year and to a 12-31-1 record during his four seasons; and as football coach at Mississippi State, ROCKEY FELKER, 37, who led the Bulldogs to a 5–6 record this season and a 21–34 mark in his five seasons with them.

RETIRED: Because of leg injuries sustained over the past three years, three-time Olympian TAMARA McKINNEY, 28. McKinney, a slalom and giant slalom specialist and a member of the U.S. ski team for 13 years, had 18 World Cup victories, the most ever by a U.S. skier.

FACES IN THE CROWD

RON T. ENNIS

JASON FERNANDEZ
SOUTH LAKE, TEXAS

Jason, a senior kicker at Carroll High, set a national high school record for career extra points with 176 when he booted eight in a 62–6 defeat of Lake Worth High. He broke the mark set by Andy Elton of Bradenton, Fla., between 1983 and '85.

MAGUIRE PHOTOGRAPHICS

DEXTER WOODFORD
AKRON

Woodford, 77, won six medals in the 75-to-79 age group division at the Masters National Long Course Championships, in Woodlands, Texas, including three golds in the 400- and the 800-meter freestyles and the 200-meter freestyle relay.

DAVID DOYLE

BRANDI GLENN
KING GEORGE, VA.

Brandi, 15, became the youngest female to win the ladies' division of the 28-gauge skeet-shooting world championships. She beat more than a thousand opponents by hitting all 125 targets she fired at, including 25 hits in a shootoff to claim the title.

EASTBURN PHOTO

BRIAN COURTNEY
HAVERTOWN, PA.

Brian, a freshman soccer forward, established a school single-game record of five goals for Bishop Shannon High in a 6–2 win over Garnet Valley High. He scored two times with his right foot, twice with his left and once with his head.

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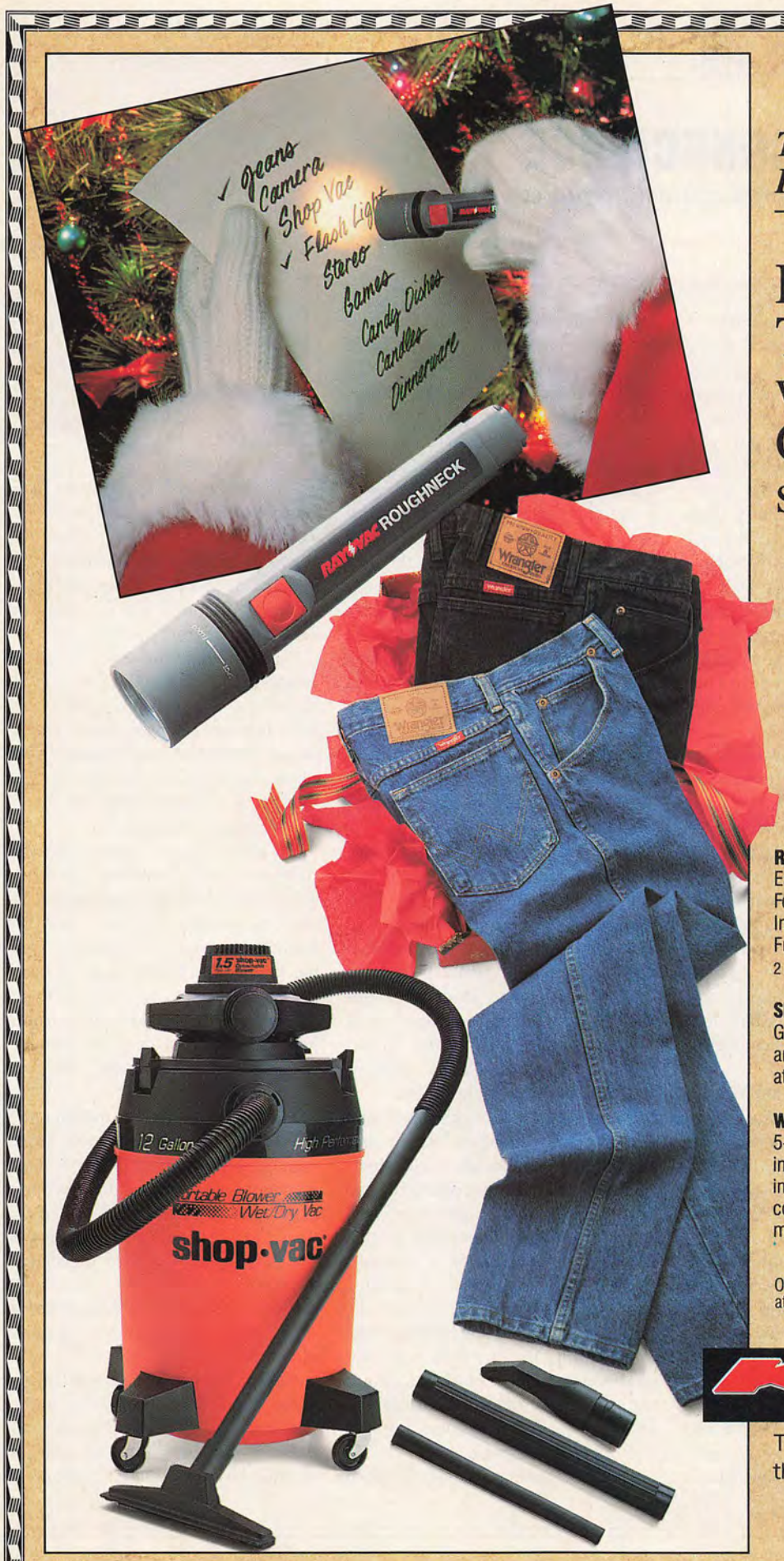
MOLLY DAVENPORT
RENO

JILL DAVENPORT
RENO

Molly and Jill, a senior and a freshman, respectively, at Reno High, won the girls' doubles title at the state high school tennis tournament by beating Erin Rogich and Aisling Bowyer of Las Vegas's Bishop Gorman High 1–6, 6–4, 6–2. The Davenports lost only three sets in winning 33 of 34 doubles matches this year, and as the Huskies' No. 3 (Molly) and No. 2 singles players, they won 160 of 164 games in the regular season. Reno High (10–0 in dual matches) finished No. 1 in the state.



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POINT AFTER

AN ACT OF CONSCIENCE

Tom Watson takes a stand against prejudice

BY JOHN GARRITY ■

BILL FRAKES

I ALMOST CHEERED WHEN I read Friday morning's front-page headline in *The Kansas City Star*: WATSON QUITS CLUB, CITING BIAS. . . . Tom Watson, winner of eight major golf championships and 32 PGA Tour titles, had resigned from the ultra-restrictive Kansas City Country Club to protest the club's blackballing of tax-preparation tycoon Henry Bloch.

Bloch, the cofounder and chairman of H&R Block, Inc., is Jewish. Watson is not Jewish, but his wife, Linda, and their two children are. Watson said his conscience forced him to resign "out of respect for my family—my wife, my children and myself."

Those close to Watson say he is torn up by the decision, and little wonder. The Kansas City Country Club has been at the center of his universe since he first appeared on its fairways in short pants, learning golf at his father's side. His longtime coach, Stan Thirsk, is the club pro and a second father to Watson. For years, when other touring pros spent the winter sharpening their games in Arizona and Florida, Watson stayed home and hit practice balls into the snow from a mat in the course superintendent's shed.

There was no warning that Watson would step forward on this issue. As recently as last summer, when the Shoal Creek controversy brought the discriminatory practices of private clubs into focus, Watson defended the status quo. He said that people should "chill out" and that private clubs had the right to choose their members. Funny how some of the most important decisions in our lives come unbidden.

Those of us who know both Watson and the Kansas City Country Club have long wondered how he handled the competing loyalties of club and family. How did he insulate his wife, his kids and his brother-in-law, Chuck Rubin, who is also his manager, from the ethnic slurs sometimes voiced in the club's public rooms?

My own feelings about the Kansas City Country Club surely color these remarks. I caddied there a few times in my teens, and, thanks to the Kansas City Junior Golf Association, I even got to play there one Thursday every summer. My notions of upper-class golf were thus formed—from the bottom looking up.

Some of what I saw I liked: the rows of lofty elms and oaks, the steep-faced bunkers, the silky greens. There was more that I disliked: the clubhouse staff's arrogance, the rudeness of certain members and, most of all, the unmistakable message that I was there at their sufferance. It was at the Kansas City Country Club, coincidentally, that I first heard the word *kike*.

Today I live within walking distance of the club. Like most Kansas Citians, I regard it as a vestige of the mid-century, something from the era of Mr. and Mrs. Bridge, the fictional Kansas City couple created by novelist Evan Connell. The Bridges of this world, I have found, live lives stunted by their simple faith in the "right" neighborhoods, the "right" schools and, of course, the "right" clubs.

I was ticked off, though, when I read that Bloch's candidacy, which was sponsored by Hallmark Cards chairman Donald Hall and seconded by two other major corporate chairmen, never got to the club's board for a vote. Bloch was thwarted by a five-man membership committee. This star chamber is so secret that only the club's president and secretary know its composition. Its members may not wear hoods during their deliberations, but their performance this time was sufficient to embarrass not just the club but the city as well.

That's the galling part of the Bloch affair. I suspect that many—possibly most—of the club's members hold Henry Bloch in high regard and would welcome him as a member. Undoubtedly, others are comfortable with the idea of Hispanic, Asian or black members. But until now fear has kept decent people from speaking out.

Fear of what, you ask? Why, the greatest fear of all—that they will no longer be accepted by their peers. Sounds trivial, but social acceptance is the glue that binds a city's power elite. Mavericks don't get the big contracts, the special tax abatements, the school buildings named in their honor.

By their recent actions, Bloch's sponsors and Watson have lifted that veil of fear. Already, prominent Kansas City Country Club members are publicly distancing themselves from the bigotry. Either Bloch or another Jewish candidate will be accepted soon, they say, or there will be more resignations. "It's going to change," vows one of the reformers. "I'm convinced of that."

The place to start, if an outsider may offer a suggestion, is with that secret membership committee. Flush those scrofulous characters into the open, make them accountable for their actions, and they won't be so quick to smear and denigrate. Next, do whatever it takes to get Tom Watson back in the fold. A friend of the Watson family says, "He's hurting something fierce right now."

Watson's pain may ease when he realizes that in his children's eyes, and in ours, this single act of conscience will one day count for more than all the trophies he has won with his clubs. ■

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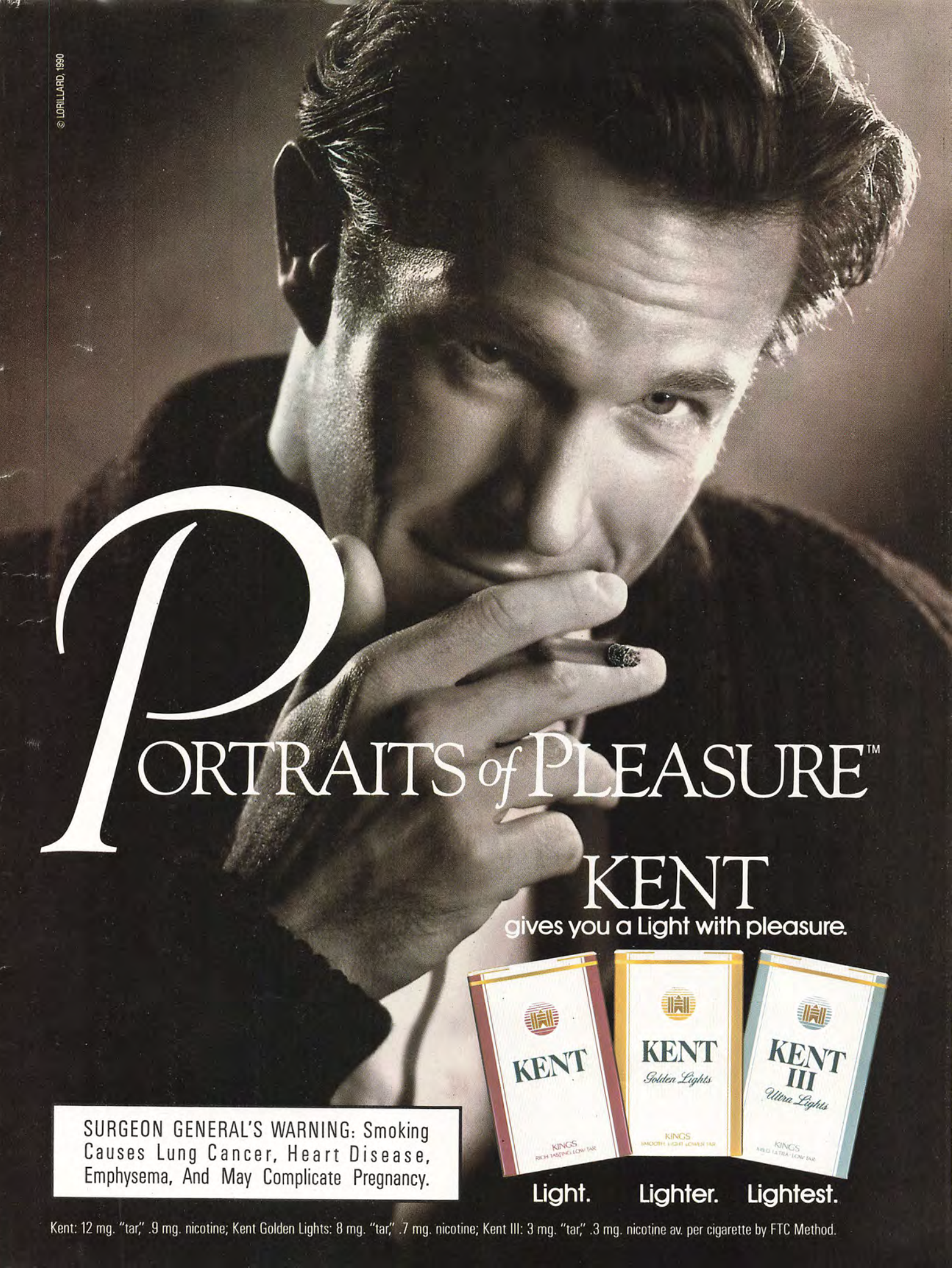

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